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**ENHANCING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE
IN EFL CLASSROOMS THROUGH THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**
CASE OF 1st, 2nd, 3rd and MASTER 1 EFL STUDENTS OF CHADLI BEN
DJEDID UNIVERSITY AT EL-TARF (ALGERIA)

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Didactics of English.

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Dedication I

To my mother, if I could thank you for a lifetime it would have not be enough, you believed in me when I could not believe in myself; I love you from the bottom of my heart, you did your best to raise both of my brother and I. Thank you for being my mom and dad.

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-Aya-Reyane

Dedication II

This small light that we celebrate today is a testament to our shared journey and the profound impact we have on each other's lives.

To my family, friends, and teachers who have been part of this journey, thank you for the laughter, support, and occasional eye-rolls along the way. This thesis may not have been the hardest task I've conquered, but it's a reminder of the joy we find in life's little challenges.

This dedication is for all the smiles and giggles we've shared, and a special nod to me who knew I had it in the bag from the start.

Keep laughing, my friends.

-Bilel Seghir

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the integration of Social Media (SM) to enhance Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) in English as Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms of the English department at Chadli Ben Djedid University of El-Tarf. The primary objective is to explore the attitudes of 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and Master1 students, as well as teachers' beliefs regarding the potential of SM to enhance ICC. A mixed-method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection methods, was employed during the fieldwork. Two questionnaires were administered to gather data from 60 EFL students and 13 EFL teachers. The findings of the study aligned with the research hypotheses, indicating that both students and teachers are supportive of integrating SM platforms such as Facebook, Whatsapp, Instagram, and others to enhance ICC in EFL classrooms. Building on these findings, pedagogical recommendations and strategies were developed to facilitate the learning and teaching process of ICC through the effective use of SM. These recommendations aim to enhance the overall learning experience and foster intercultural competence among EFL learners.

Keywords: Social Media (SM), Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC), EFL students and teachers, students' attitudes, teachers' beliefs.

الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التحقيق في دمج وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي لتعزيز الكفاءة التواصلية الثقافية في فصول اللغة وبالتحديد في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة الشاذلي بن جديد بالطارف. تستكشف الدراسة مواقف طلاب الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية السنة الأولى والثانية والثالثة والسنة أولى ماستير، ومعتقدات الاساتذة تجاه تعزيز الكفاءة التواصلية الثقافية من خلال استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي. يتم إجراء العمل الميداني باستخدام أسلوب مختلط (كمي ونوعي)، حيث تم توزيع استبيانين لجمع البيانات من الطلاب والاساتذة. يشارك في الدراسة 60 طالباً في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية و 13 استاذاً من قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة شاذلي بن جديد بالطارف. أظهرت نتائج الدراسة توافقاً مع الفرضيات البحثية، مشيرة إلى أن الطلاب والمعلمين على حد سواء يدعمون تكامل منصات وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي مثل الفيسبوك وواتساب وإنستجرام وغيرها لتعزيز الكفاءة الاتصالية الثقافية بين الثقافات في فصول تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. استناداً إلى هذه النتائج، تم تطوير توصيات واستراتيجيات تعليمية لتسهيل عملية تعلم الكفاءة الاتصالية الثقافية بين الثقافات من خلال الاستفادة الفعالة من وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي. تهدف هذه التوصيات إلى تحسين تجربة التعلم العامة وتعزيز الكفاءة الثقافية بين طلاب تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، الكفاءة التواصلية الثقافية، طلاب و اساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية،

مواقف الطلاب، معتقدات المعلمين

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List of Abbreviations

CC: Communicative Competence

CQ: Cultural Intelligence

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

IDI: Intercultural Development Inventory

ICC: Intercultural Communicative Competence

SM: Social Media

SMP: Social Media Platforms

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General Introduction

1. Introduction

In today's interconnected world, the importance of intercultural communicative competence (ICC) in language education cannot be overstated. As societies became increasingly diverse and globalized, individuals are required to navigate cross-cultural interactions and communicate effectively across linguistic and cultural boundaries. ICC refers to the ability to understand, appreciate, and interact with individuals from different cultures, demonstrating not only linguistic proficiency, but also cultural awareness and sensitivity.

Language learning plays a crucial role in fostering ICC, as it provides learners with the necessary language skills to use in meaningful cross-cultural communication. Traditionally, language learning has focused primarily on linguistic aspects, such as grammar and vocabulary, with limited emphasis on cultural understanding. However, recognizing the integral relationship between language and culture, teachers are now exploring innovative approaches to integrate cultural components into language curricula.

One area of particular interest in recent years has been the incorporation of Social Media (SM) into language learning. Social Media Platforms (SMP), such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, have become viral in contemporary society, shaping the way people communicate, interact and access information. Leveraging the power of SM as an educational resource offers promising opportunities to enhance ICC among language learners. By using SMP, teachers can expose students to cultural content, facilitating cross-cultural interactions and providing immersive learning experiences that link the gap between language and culture.

While the potential benefits of integrating SM into language learning for the enhancement of ICC are widely recognized, there is a need for empirical research to explore teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards this approach and its impact on students' ICC. Understanding the perspectives of language teaching is crucial in determining the feasibility and effectiveness of integrating SM into language education and especially English as Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms.

In light of these considerations, the present study aims to investigate students' attitudes and teachers' beliefs regarding the integration of SM into language learning and its impact on the enhancement of ICC. This study seeks to contribute to the existing knowledge base and provide insights into effective pedagogical practices for enhancing ICC in EFL classrooms.

2. Statement of the Problem

The problem addressed in this study is the need to explore the integration of SM in teaching language to enhance students' ICC. Students tend to be less motivated to learn culture and interculturality modules because most of the teachers focus on teaching these modules using traditional ways instead of finding new authentic materials rather than just pen and paper. With the increasing prevalence of SMP and the increasing importance of intercultural communication in a globalized world, there is a gap in understanding how SM can effectively be used to promote ICC among EFL learners. By rising this problem, the study aims to contribute to the field of language learning and provide valuable insights for teachers and curriculum-makers to enhance language teaching practices and promote intercultural understanding among students.

3. Significance of the Study

This study is significant for several reasons. It demonstrates the need to explore the integration of SM into EFL classrooms to enhance students' ICC. It contributes to the existing

knowledge in language learning and intercultural communication. The findings can inform curriculum development, instructional strategies and curriculum-making in education. Moreover, this study recognizes the evolving role of technology and its impact on language learning, offering practical insights for teachers to effectively integrate SMP into their teaching practices.

4. Research Questions

The following research questions guide this study:

- What are the students' attitudes towards the enhancement of Intercultural Communicative Competence through Social Media?
- Do teachers believe that integrating social media into language teaching enhance students' intercultural communicative competence?

5. Research Hypotheses

Based on these research questions, the following hypotheses are formulated:

- Students show positive attitudes towards the enhancement of Intercultural Communicative Competence through Social Media.
- Teachers believe that integrating Social Media into language teaching enhances students' intercultural communicative competence.

6. Methodology

The study employed a descriptive research design using mixed methods to investigate the integration of SM into language learning and its impact on students' ICC. Two questionnaires were addressed, one for students and another for teachers of the English department at Chadli Ben Djedid University of El-Tarf, to gather quantitative data on their perspectives, attitudes, and experiences related to SM use and ICC enhancement.

The first questionnaire targeted students and focused on reporting their attitudes and experiences related to the use of SM for intercultural learning. The student questionnaire contained a combination of “Yes” or “No”, multiple-choice and Likert-scale (close-ended) questions to assess their perceptions and attitudes towards SM usage and its impact on their ICC enhancement. The data obtained from the student questionnaire were also analyzed using descriptive and statistics to identify preferences and attitudes in their responses.

The second questionnaire was designed to gather data from teachers and aimed to explore their perspectives on integrating SM into language learning and its aptitude to enhance students’ ICC. Similar to the students’ questionnaire, this questionnaire consisted of “Yes” or “No”, multiple-choice, Likert-scale (open-ended) questions along with some open-ended questions, allowing teachers to provide their opinions and attitudes towards the use of SM in the classroom. The data collected from the teacher questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive and statistics to examine patterns and trends in their responses.

The quantitative method of the questionnaires allowed for the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data, enabling a more objective analysis of the participants’ perspectives and attitudes. The use of semi-structured questionnaires facilitated the comparison of responses across different variables and provided a standardized approach to data collection.

7. Structure of the Thesis

The study conducted included:

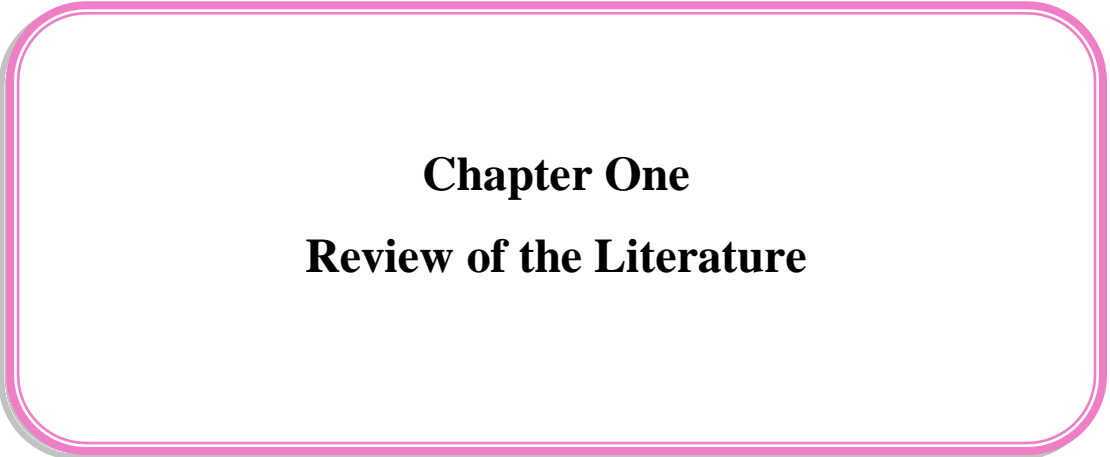
- Chapter One: Literature Review. In this chapter, a comprehensive literature review was conducted to explore the existing research and theoretical frameworks related to the integration of SM into language education and its impact on students’ ICC. This chapter provided a solid theoretical foundation for the study, examining key concepts, theories and empirical evidence in

the field. The literature review aimed to identify gaps in the current literature and establish the rationale for the study.

- Chapter Two: Methodology, Data Analysis, Interpretation and Discussion of the Results.

This chapter focused on the methodology employed in the research including the research design, research location, population and sample and the research instruments along with their descriptions and the analysis of the collected data from both students' and teachers' questionnaires. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results were interpreted separately. The last part of this chapter was the discussion of the findings.

- Chapter Three: Limitations, Implications and Recommendations. This chapter presented the limitations of the study and discussed their implications for both students and teachers regarding the use of SM in the enhancement of ICC in EFL classrooms. Based on the results, recommendations were provided for students, teachers and policy-makers to support the effective integration of SM into language teaching and learning. A set of recommendations for further researches were provided by the end of this chapter. The chapter highlighted the potential benefits of leveraging SM as a tool to promote ICC among students.



Chapter One
Review of the Literature

Introduction

Intercultural communicative competence (ICC) is becoming an increasingly important skill for students to develop in today's globalized world. The ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with people from diverse cultural backgrounds is essential for success in academic and professional settings. While traditional classroom instruction can provide a foundation for developing ICC, the use of SM offers an opportunity to enhance ICC in a more interactive and engaging way. SMP provide a space for students to interact with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds and engage in cross-cultural communication. Therefore, this review of literature aims to provide an overview of the current research on the use of SM in educational settings, with a focus on its potential to enhance ICC among students.

1.1. Communicative Competence

Communicative Competence (CC) is a key component of effective intercultural communication. According to Spitzberg and Cupach (1984), CC is defined as “the ability to communicate appropriately, effectively, and ethically in a given context” (p. 7). It involves not only linguistic competence, but also the ability to understand and use nonverbal cues, to adapt to different communication styles, and to be sensitive to cultural differences in communication norms and values.

In intercultural communication, CC is particularly important because it enables individuals to navigate the complexities of communication across cultural boundaries. As Byram (1997) notes, intercultural communicative competence involves not only the ability to use

language, but also the ability to understand cultural perspectives, to engage in empathic communication, and to appreciate the diversity of cultural backgrounds and experiences.

In the context of education, CC is an essential skill for students to develop, particularly as globalization and internationalization continue to reshape the educational settings. By equipping students with the tools and strategies to communicate effectively across cultural boundaries, teachers can help to prepare them for success in an increasingly interconnected world.

1.1.1. Models of the Communicative Competence

1.1.1.1. Hymes's Model

Hymes's model of CC (1972) emphasizes the importance of understanding social and cultural contexts when communicating with others. According to Hymes (1972), communicative competence involves not only grammatical knowledge and the ability to produce and understand sentences but also the knowledge of how to use language effectively in different social contexts. He identified four components of CC: linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competence.

Linguistic competence refers to knowledge of the language's grammar, syntax, and vocabulary.

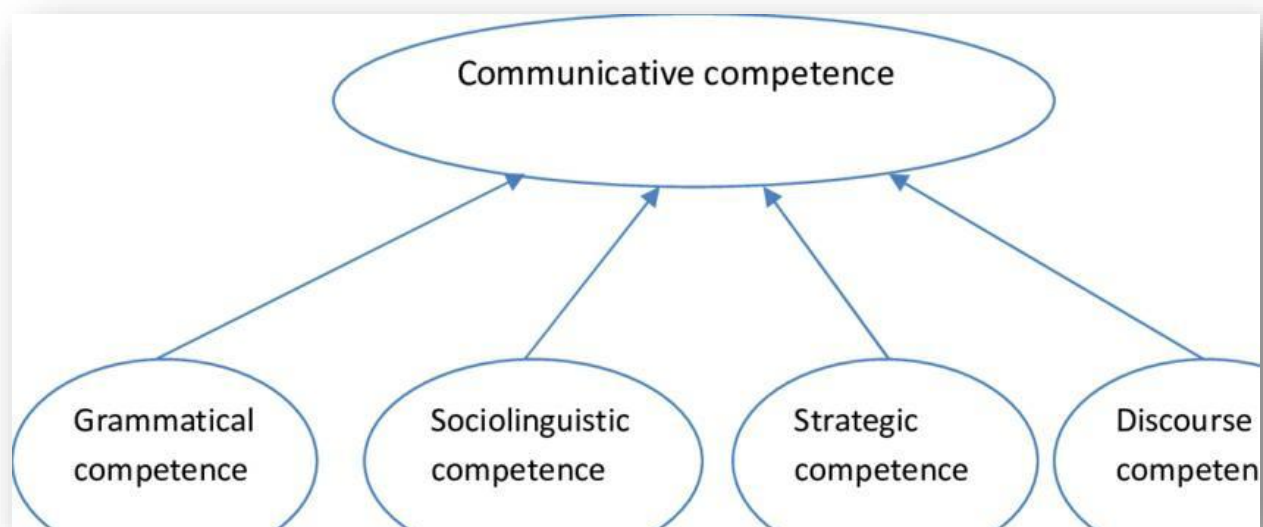
Sociolinguistic competence involves understanding the social rules that govern language use, such as politeness conventions, and how language varies according to social and cultural contexts.

Discourse competence refers to the ability to produce and interpret longer stretches of language in meaningful ways, such as understanding the structure and organization of conversations or narratives.

Strategic competence refers to the ability to use language effectively to achieve communicative goals, such as using repair strategies when communication breaks down (Canale & Swain, 1980).

Hymes's model of CC has been widely influential in the field of language teaching and learning, and it has been adapted and expanded upon by other scholars. It highlights the importance of understanding the social and cultural contexts of communication and the need for language learners to develop a range of skills and knowledge beyond just grammar and vocabulary.

1.1.1.2. Canale and Swain's Model of Communicative Competence



Picture 01: Canale and Swain's Model of CC (1980)

Canale and Swain (1980) proposed a model of CC that includes four components: grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence.

Grammatical competence refers to the knowledge of the rules of grammar and syntax that enable a speaker to form accurate and meaningful sentences.

Discourse competence refers to the knowledge of how to use language in a meaningful and appropriate way in different communicative situations. It includes knowledge of the rules of discourse organization and the ability to use various discourse strategies to achieve specific communicative goals.

Sociolinguistic competence refers to the knowledge of the social and cultural norms of language use, including the appropriate use of language in different social contexts, the ability to interpret and use nonverbal cues, and the understanding of cultural references.

Strategic competence refers to the ability to use communication strategies to compensate for breakdowns in communication or to enhance communication. It includes the ability to use various repair strategies to fix communication breakdowns, the ability to use different communication strategies to achieve specific communicative goals, and the ability to use metacognitive strategies to monitor and regulate communication.

Canale and Swain's model emphasizes that CC involves more than just knowledge of the rules of grammar and vocabulary. It also includes knowledge of how to use language in different communicative situations and an understanding of the social and cultural contexts of communication.

1.2. Intercultural Communicative Competence

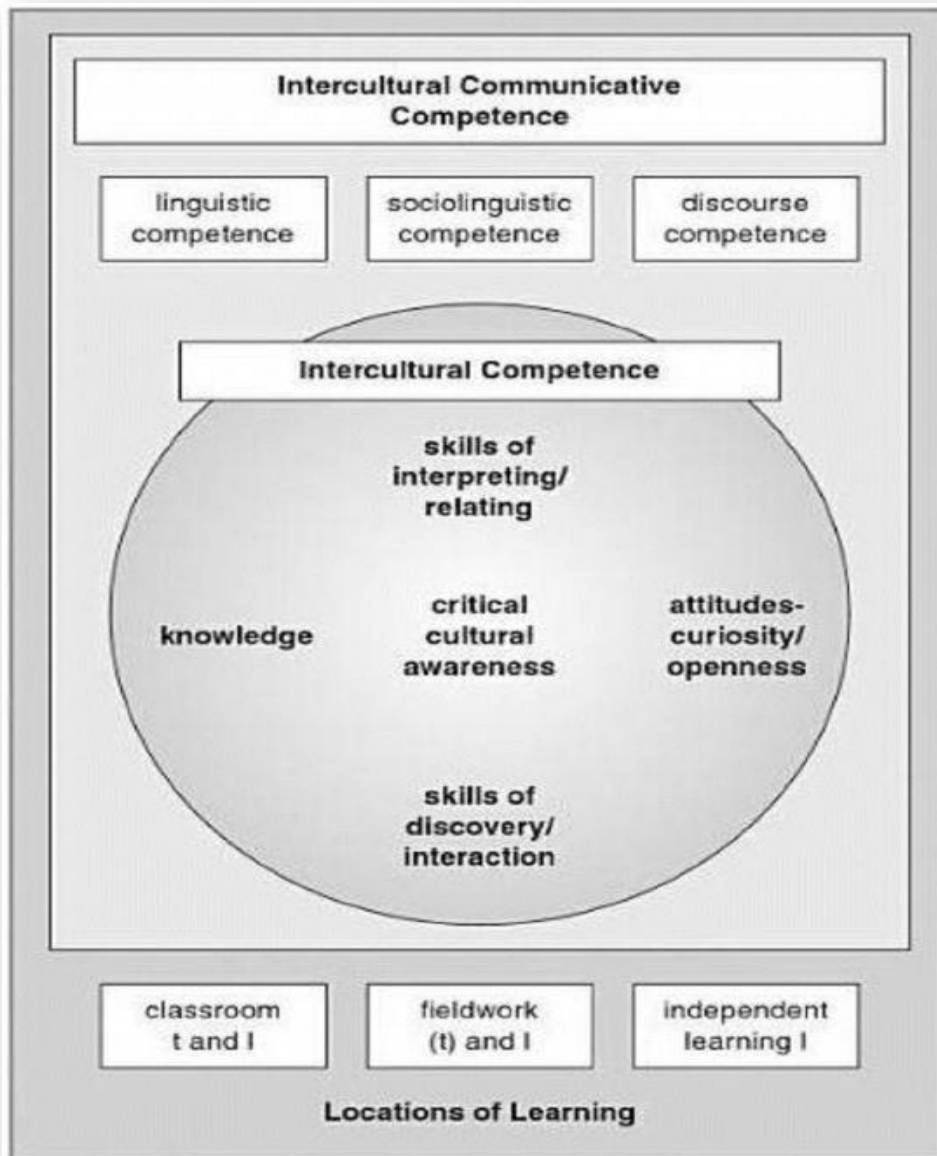
ICC refers to the ability to effectively and appropriately communicate and interact with individuals from different cultural backgrounds, taking into account differences in language, behavior and customs (Byram, 1997). It involves not only linguistic proficiency, but also a deep

understanding and appreciation of other cultures, as well as the ability to adapt one's communication style to meet the needs and expectations of people from diverse backgrounds.

This definition is widely accepted and used in the field of intercultural communication. It highlights the importance of both linguistic and cultural knowledge, as well as the ability to adapt to different cultural contexts. It also emphasizes the need for sensitivity and respect towards other cultures, which is essential for effective intercultural communication.

1.2.1. **Byram' model of ICC**

Byram's model of ICC is widely used in the field of language education and intercultural communication. According to Byram (1997), intercultural communicative competence is the ability to interact effectively and appropriately with people from different cultures. It involves not only linguistic skills, but also knowledge of the cultural and social norms that govern communication in different contexts.



Picture 02: Byram's Model of ICC (1997)

Byram's model consists of five components: attitudes, knowledge, skills, critical-thinking and autonomy.

Attitudes refer to the open-mindedness, curiosity, and respect for other cultures that learners should develop in order to engage in effective intercultural communication. This

involves being aware of one's own cultural biases and assumptions, and being willing to learn about and appreciate other cultures.

Knowledge refers to the factual and interpretive knowledge that learners need to have about other cultures in order to communicate effectively. This includes knowledge of cultural norms, values and beliefs, as well as knowledge of the history, geography and politics of different cultures.

Skills refer to the communicative skills that learners need to have in order to interact effectively with people from different cultures. These include both verbal and nonverbal communication skills, such as the ability to listen actively, negotiate meaning and adapt one's communication style to different cultural contexts.

Critical-Thinking refers to the ability to analyze and evaluate different cultural perspectives and to reflect critically on one's own cultural assumptions and biases. This involves questioning one's own assumptions and being willing to consider alternative viewpoints and ways of thinking.

Autonomy refers to the ability to take responsibility for one's own learning and to engage in self-directed learning. This involves being able to identify one's own learning goals, to monitor and evaluate one's progress and to seek out opportunities for further learning.

Overall, Byram's model emphasizes the importance of developing learners' attitudes, knowledge, skills, critical thinking and autonomy in order to enable them to communicate effectively with people from different cultures. By incorporating these components into language education and intercultural communication courses, teachers can help learners develop the competencies they need to succeed in a globalized world.

1.2.2. ICC in Education

ICC has become an important topic in education due to the increasingly globalized nature of society. It refers to the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with people from different cultural backgrounds. In education, ICC can be developed through various methods such as study abroad programs, language classes and cross-cultural communication workshops.

According to Bennett (2013), developing ICC in education is important because it helps students to better understand different perspectives and promotes empathy and understanding. This is especially crucial in today's diverse and interconnected world. In addition, Byram (1997) argues that ICC is necessary for successful communication in any language and culture.

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in using technology, including social media (SM), to enhance ICC in education. As Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) point out, social media can provide a platform for cross-cultural communication and interaction.

Social media platforms (SMP) such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram allow students to connect with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds and engage in intercultural communications.

Research has shown that the use of SM can have a positive impact on the development of ICC among students. According to Li and Ranieri (2010), SM can help students to learn about different cultures and to develop intercultural sensitivity. In addition, SM can promote the use of different languages and facilitate the development of language skills. However, it is important to note that SM is not a panacea for ICC development in education. As Kim (2018) argues, SM can also reinforce stereotypes and cultural biases, and may not provide an accurate representation of different cultures. Therefore, it is important for teachers to use SM as a tool for ICC enhancement with caution and to provide guidance and support to students.

1.2.2.1. Approaches for Teaching ICC

Teaching ICC involves developing students' ability to communicate effectively with individuals from different cultural backgrounds. This requires not only knowledge of different cultures, but also the ability to adapt one's communication style to accommodate cultural differences. ICC can be taught through a variety of methods, including classroom instruction, experiential learning and language immersion programs.

According to Deardorff (2006), teaching ICC involves developing three key components: knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Knowledge includes understanding cultural similarities and differences, as well as the ability to recognize and overcome stereotypes and biases. Skills involve the ability to communicate effectively with individuals from different cultural backgrounds, including nonverbal communication, listening skills and adaptability. Attitudes involve having an open and curious mindset towards different cultures, as well as a willingness to learn and embrace cultural differences.

Teaching ICC is a complex and multifaceted endeavor that requires a range of teaching strategies, materials and assessment tools. It involves promoting both cognitive and affective development and requires educators to be aware of their own cultural biases and to develop their own ICC. ICC cannot be taught in isolation, but must be integrated across the curriculum in all subjects, and across all levels of education.

(Deardorff, 2006, p. 168)

One approach to teaching ICC is through the use of cultural immersion programs. These programs provide students with the opportunity to live and study in a foreign culture, allowing them to gain first-hand experience and develop a deeper understanding of cultural differences. In

addition to language learning, immersion programs often include cultural activities and excursions, providing students with a more comprehensive cultural experience.

Another approach to teaching ICC is through classroom instruction. This can involve incorporating cultural content into the curriculum, as well as providing students with chances to engage in cross-cultural communication exercises. For example, students may be asked to work in groups with individuals from different cultural backgrounds, allowing them to practice their communication and collaboration skills in a diverse setting.

1.2.2.2. Assessing ICC

Assessing ICC is a complex and a challenging process for both teachers and learners. The assessment should consider both the linguistic and cultural aspects of communication. There are various assessment tools that have been developed to measure ICC, including self-assessments, peer assessments and teacher assessments.

One widely used assessment tool is the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) developed by Mitchell Hammer and Milton Bennett (1998). The IDI measures an individual's intercultural competence along a continuum of six stages of development. Another tool is the Cultural Intelligence (CQ) assessment developed by Earley and Ang (2003), which measures an individual's ability to adapt to different cultural settings.

However, there are also criticisms of these assessment tools, as they may not fully capture the complex and dynamic nature of ICC. Some scholars argue that assessment should focus more on the process of intercultural learning and development, rather than just the final outcome.

1.2.2.3. Benefits of Enhancing Students' ICC

According to a study done by Kim and Solomon (2017), it has been suggested that developing ICC is crucial for students to excel in today's global society and economy. The study suggests that by improving their ICC, students will be better equipped to overcome the obstacles and take advantage of the opportunities presented by an increasingly diverse world (p. 21).

Developing ICC can have several benefits for students such as:

- It allows students to develop a better understanding of different cultures, beliefs and practices. This can lead to enhanced global awareness.
- It can help students develop better communication skills, including active listening, empathy and the ability to adapt their communication style to different cultural contexts.
- It can facilitate cross-cultural collaboration by enabling students to work effectively with people from different cultural backgrounds.
- It can also enhance academic success by promoting critical thinking skills and enhancing the ability to work in diverse teams.

1.2.2.4. Challenges in Enhancing Students' ICC

Enhancing students' ICC can be a challenging task for teachers. According to Brinkman and Deane (2014), some of the challenges include "limited opportunities for authentic intercultural communication, lack of motivation to engage in intercultural dialogue, and resistance to change" (p. 45). In addition, teachers may also face challenges related to the assessment of ICC, as it can be difficult to measure and evaluate such a complex set of skills. Other challenges may include language barriers, cultural stereotypes and institutional barriers. Overcoming these challenges requires a concerted effort from teachers, students and institutions to promote intercultural communication and foster an inclusive learning environment.

1.2.2.5. The Importance of ICC in EFL classrooms

ICC is an essential skill that should be developed in EFL classrooms. As emphasized by Chen and Starosta (2000), students with ICC are better equipped to communicate effectively and appropriately with individuals from different cultures, and thus, more likely to succeed in the globalized world. In the EFL context, where students are learning a language that is not their native tongue, the development of ICC can also lead to a better understanding and appreciation of the English language culture.

In addition, ICC can help to promote tolerance, respect and empathy for diverse cultures, which is especially important in today's world. By enhancing ICC in EFL classrooms, EFL students can learn to recognize and appreciate the differences and similarities between cultures, and communicate with people from different backgrounds in a respectful and effective manner. However, enhancing ICC in EFL classrooms is still a challenging task. According to Han (2015), language barriers, stereotypes and cultural biases can hinder the development of ICC among students. Additionally, limited exposure to diverse cultures and lack of intercultural training for teachers can also be obstacles. Therefore, it is crucial for EFL teachers to receive training on how to effectively promote ICC in their classrooms and to create a classroom environment that values diversity and intercultural communication.

1.3. Social Media

According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), "Social Media is becoming an increasingly popular tool for communication and education, and its impact on society cannot be ignored." That's why SM has become an integral part of daily life for many individuals, providing a platform for communication, social interaction and information sharing. As a result, SM has been increasingly used in educational contexts as a tool for enhancing learning and intercultural

communication. SMP offer a unique opportunity for students to interact with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds and to engage in cross-cultural communication.

1.3.1. Overview of SM

SM refers to a range of online platforms and tools that enable users to create, share and interact with content, and to connect with others in real-time, through SMP such as Facebook, Instagram, telegram, Twitter, etc. as well as blogging sites, photo and video sharing sites and instant messaging apps.

At the heart of SM is the idea of user-generated content, which allows users to create and share their own content, such as status updates, blog posts, photos, and videos, with others in their network. “New social media means that everyone is a publisher and everyone is a critic” (Georgetown University, 2010). SMP also facilitate real-time communication, enabling users to interact with others in real-time through features like instant messaging, live chat and video conferencing.

SM has become a pervasive part of daily life, with billions of users worldwide. It has transformed the way of communication, sharing information and connecting with others, offering a new level of accessibility and immediacy. As such, SM has emerged as a powerful tool for social interaction, communication and collaboration, with applications across a wide range of domains, from business and marketing, to education, politics and activism.

1.3.2. Brief History of the Development of SM

SM has become an integral part of modern communication and has undergone significant development since its inception. A brief history of SM can provide insights into the evolution and innovation in this field, with new platforms and technologies emerging regularly and shaping the ways in which people connect online.

1997: The first recognizable SM site, Six Degrees, was created. It allowed users to upload a profile and connect with other users. (Boyd & Ellison, 2008)

2002: Friendster was launched, quickly gaining popularity in Asia and the United States. (Boyd & Ellison, 2008)

2003: LinkedIn was launched as a platform for professionals to connect and share information. (Kietzmann et al., 2011)

2004: Facebook was founded by Mark Zuckerberg, initially as a platform for Harvard students to connect. Later that year, it was opened to other universities and eventually the general public. (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010)

2005: YouTube was launched, allowing users to share and watch videos online. (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010)

2006: Twitter was founded, allowing users to post short messages, or “tweets” and follow others’ updates in real-time. (Kietzmann et al., 2011)

2010: Instagram was launched as a photo-sharing app, later expanding to include video and other content. (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010)

2011: Snapchat was founded, allowing users to share short-lived, self-destructing messages and media. (Kietzmann et al., 2011)

2013: Vine was launched as a short-form video sharing platform, allowing users to create and share six-second looping videos. (Kietzmann et al., 2016)

2015: Periscope was launched as a live streaming app, allowing users to broadcast and view live video feeds. (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2016)

2016: Pokémon Go was released, becoming a viral sensation and showcasing the potential of augmented reality technology in social media. (Kietzmann et al., 2016)

2018: Tiktok, a SMP for sharing short-form videos, was launched and quickly gained popularity among younger audiences. (Chen & Chen, 2020)

2019: Instagram removed public like counts from posts in several countries, sparking a conversation about the impact of SM on mental health and wellbeing. (Tang, 2020)

2020: With the outbreak of COVID-19, SM usage surged as people turned to these platforms for connection and information during lockdowns and social distancing measures. (Gao et al., 2020)

2021: Clubhouse, an invitation-only audio chat app, gained popularity among tech industry insiders and influencers, sparking a new trend in SM. (Gillespie & Boczkowski, 2021)

This brief history of SM highlights the ongoing evolution and innovation in the field, with new platforms and technologies emerging regularly and shaping the ways in which people communicate and connect online.

1.3.3. Social Media Usage and Trends

SM has become an essential part of people's lives all over the world. Its usage has increased rapidly over the past decade, and it has influenced various aspects of society, including communication, business, politics, and culture. SM has brought about a significant change in the way people interact with each other, and it has provided new opportunities for individuals and organizations to connect and engage with their audience.

Table01.

The Numbers of Social Media Platforms Users

Social Media Platform	Estimated Number of Users (2022)
Facebook	2.85 billion

YouTube	2.3 billion
WhatsApp	2.0 billion
Instagram	1.3 billion
Tiktok	1.2 billion
WeChat	1.2 billion
QQ	680 million
Telegram	550 million
Snapchat	375 million
Twitter	330 million
LinkedIn	310 million

Table02.

Statistics of Social Media Usage in the World and in Algeria

Country	Percentage of population using social media (2021)	Top social media platform	Number of users on top platform (millions)
Algeria	22%	Facebook	7.4
Brazil	71%	WhatsApp	120
China	50%	WeChat	1.24 billion
India	34%	WhatsApp	530
Japan	28%	Line	84
Russia	69%	VKontakte	97
United Kingdom	66%	Facebook	44

United States

69%

Facebook

223

Data Reported. (2021). Digital 2021: Global overview report. Retrieved from <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2021-global-overview-report>

Comparative Analysis:

SM usage in Algeria is relatively low compared to the global average, with a penetration rate of 50% compared to 69% globally. However, the average time spent on SM in Algeria is slightly higher than the global average of 2 hours and 25 minutes.

Facebook remains the most popular SMP in both global and Algerian markets, followed by other messaging and video-sharing SMP.

SM usage in Algeria is dominated by younger generations, with over 70% of users aged between 18 and 34, similar to the global trend.

"Digital 2022: Global Overview Report" by We Are Social and Hootsuite.

"Internet World Stats - Algeria" by Miniwatts Marketing Group.

1.3.4. Reasons of the Popularity of Social Media

SM has made it easier for people to connect and communicate with one another, regardless of distance. This has allowed people to maintain relationships with friends and family members who may live abroad or far away. As noted by SM researcher Danah Boyd, "People use social media to connect with others who share their interests and to connect with friends and famil" (Boyd, 2010). Also its platforms offer a variety of entertainment options, including videos, music, and games. These features make it an attractive way to pass the time and have fun. According Hootsuite's report, "The average person spends 2 hours and 24 minutes per day on social media" (Simon, 2021). The reason for that was explained by Perrin (2021), the

increasing usage of smartphones and other mobile devices has facilitated the accessibility of SM, leading to the recent surge in popularity of SMP.

SMP provide a means for people to share news, information and ideas quickly and easily. This has made SM an important tool for staying up-to-date on current events and trends. According to the Pew Research Center, “News plays a varying role across the social networking sites studied. Two-thirds of Facebook users (66%) get news on the site, nearly six-in-ten Twitter users (59%) get news on Twitter, and seven-in-ten Reddit users get news on that platform” (Shearer & Matsu, 2018).

And the biggest reason for its recent popularity is that it became a popular way for businesses to reach consumers and promote their products or services. This has contributed to the growth and popularity of SMP. As noted by SM expert Gary Vaynerchuk, “The attention on social media is insane. If you’re not leveraging it to market your business, you’re leaving a lot of money on the table” (Vaynerchuk, 2020).

1.3.5. The Impact of Social Media on Society

The impact of SM development on society has been a widely debated topic in recent years. On one hand, SMP have created new opportunities for communication and information sharing, enabling individuals and groups to connect across geographic and cultural boundaries. On the other hand, concerns have been raised about the potential negative effects of SM, including the spread of misinformation, the promotion of cyberbullying and online harassment, and the impact on mental health. Studies have shown that SM use has been linked to increased levels of anxiety, depression, and feelings of loneliness and isolation (Lin, 2011; Twenge & Campbell, 2009). Additionally, SM has been criticized for its role in spreading fake news and

conspiracy theories (Woolley & Howard, 2016), and for contributing to the spread of hate speech and extremist ideologies (Bail et al., 2018).

Despite these concerns, SM continues to play a significant role in shaping public opinion and driving social and political change. As such, understanding the impact of SM development on society is an important area of study for researchers, policymakers, and the general public.

1.3.6. The Role of Social Media in Communication

SMP have transformed the way people communicate and interact with each other. SM has become a vital tool for communication in many aspects of life, including personal, professional and educational contexts. According to Boyd and Ellison (2008), SM allows users to “articulate and make visible their social networks, to establish or maintain connections with others, and to share information and experiences” (p. 211). Similarly,

Social media has the potential to facilitate communication across geographic and cultural boundaries by lowering the cost and increasing the speed of communication. Social media may also allow users to present themselves in ways that are more authentic and personalized than traditional forms of communication. (Hampton et al., 2006, p. 168)

In addition, SM has also expanded the scope of communication by providing access to a wider range of audiences and enabling users to communicate with people they would not have been able to previously. SM has also impacted communication by providing users with new modes of communication, such as emojis, gifs, and memes. These new modes of communication allow users to express emotions and convey messages in new ways. SMP have also created new forms of communication, such as live streaming and video conferencing, which have transformed the way people interact and communicate.

1.3.6.1. The Benefits and Drawbacks of using SM in Communication

SM has significantly impacted communication by providing new opportunities for people to connect and share information. However, it is essential to recognize the potential drawbacks and take measures to mitigate their impact.

As for a quote, a study by Statista states, “As of 2021, social network penetration worldwide stood at 49 percent, with North America having the highest penetration rate at 70 percent and East Asia the lowest at 24 percent.” (Statista, 2021)

This table shows some of the benefits and drawbacks of using social media in communication.

Table03.

Benefits and Drawbacks of Social Media in Communication

Benefits	Drawbacks
Instantaneous communication across distance and time zones	Potential for misunderstandings and misinterpretation
Cost-effective alternative to traditional communication methods	Can be time-consuming and lead to distraction
Ability to reach a large audience quickly	Concerns over privacy and security
Facilitates the exchange of ideas and information	Tendency towards superficial or shallow communication
Provides opportunities for networking and collaboration	Risk of online harassment or cyberbullying
Increased access to diverse perspectives and global communities	Potential for addiction or dependence
Can enhance interpersonal relationships and social support	Can contribute to social isolation and loneliness
Offers opportunities for self-expression and	Fosters a culture of constant comparison and

1.3.7. Social Media in Education

SM has become an integral part of many aspects of modern life, and education is no exception. The increasing use of SM in educational contexts has opened up new opportunities for teaching and learning. One major role that SM can play in education is to facilitate communication and collaboration among students and between students and their teachers. “Social media is now one of the main sources of communication, and it is not just used for personal reasons anymore. Educational institutions are using social media to reach out to prospective students, alumni, and to create a sense of community amongst their students.” (Wang and Chen, 2011)

SMP such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram provide students with a means of communicating with each other and with their teachers. These platforms can be used to share ideas, ask questions and collaborate on assignments. In addition, SM can help to break down the barriers that sometimes exist between students and their teachers, enabling more open and informal communication.

Another role that SM can play in education is to provide students with access to a wide range of educational resources. SMP are increasingly being used to share educational content, such as videos, podcasts, and blogs. This can help students to learn about a wide range of topics and to access resources that they might not otherwise have been aware of. However, it is important to note that SM use in education is not without its challenges. One of the biggest challenges is ensuring that students use SM responsibly and in ways that are consistent with educational goals.

There are also concerns about the potential for SM to distract students from their studies or to create an unhealthy obsession with likes and shares. Despite these challenges, the role of SM in education is likely to continue to grow in the coming years. As SMP continue to evolve and new platforms emerge, teachers will need to continue to adapt their teaching strategies in order to take advantage of the opportunities that SM presents.

Overall, SM has the potential to be a valuable tool in education, but it is important to use thoughtfully and purposefully, with a clear understanding of its benefits and drawbacks.

1.3.7.1. The Benefits and Drawbacks of using Social Media in Education

SM's role in education is a topic that has gained a lot of attention in recent years. As stated by Manca and Ranieri (2016), "Social media are regarded as powerful tools to promote knowledge-sharing activities, collaborative learning, interaction, and engagement among students and teachers" (p. 2). While there are certainly benefits to using SM in education, there are also potential drawbacks that must be considered.

Table04.

Benefits and Drawbacks of using Social Media in Education

Benefits	Drawbacks
Enhanced communication and collaboration	Risk of distraction and time-wasting
Access to a wealth of educational resources	Risk of cyberbullying and harassment
Increased engagement and motivation	Potential for misinformation and fake news
Opportunity for personalized learning	Risk of addiction and dependency
Improved digital literacy and technology skills	Concerns over privacy and data security

It is important to note that the benefits and drawbacks of using SM for educational purposes may vary depending on the context and specific implementation. While SM can provide valuable resources and opportunities for learning, it is important for educators to carefully consider the potential risks and take steps to mitigate them.

1.4.1. Overview of the Usage of SM in ICC



Picture 03: The Importance of Intercultural Communication Training to the Global Workforce. ATD BLOG, by Sinden, J. 2021.

The use of SM has become increasingly prevalent in promoting ICC among students. SMP provide opportunities for students to engage with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds, allowing them to develop a deeper understanding of different cultural perspectives and norms (Kramsch, 2018). Additionally, SMP can facilitate the development of language and communication skills, as students are able to practice using different languages in a more authentic and meaningful context (Lam, 2015).

Several studies have highlighted the potential of SM in promoting ICC among students. For example, Gao and Bai (2018) conducted a study on the use of WeChat, a popular Chinese social media platform, in promoting intercultural communication among international students in China. They found that the use of WeChat facilitated the development of intercultural friendships and increased students' cultural awareness and sensitivity.

Similarly, in a study conducted by Wang and Chen (2018) on the use of Facebook in an EFL classroom, they found that the use of Facebook as a supplementary tool for language learning and intercultural communication helped students improve their language proficiency and develop their ICC.

Overall, the use of SM has the potential to enhance students' ICC by providing opportunities for intercultural communication, promoting cultural awareness and sensitivity, and facilitating the development of language and communication skills.

1.4.2. Effectiveness of SM in Enhancing ICC

Studies have shown that SM can be an effective tool in enhancing ICC. For example, Chao, Parker, and Fontana (2014) conducted a study that found that the use of SM in an intercultural communication course led to an increase in intercultural competence and the development of positive attitudes toward cultural diversity. Similarly, in a study by Zhu and Chen (2015), it was found that using SMP such as Facebook and Twitter in language classes can help students to develop ICC and increase their motivation to learn.

Furthermore, SM provides opportunities for students to engage in authentic intercultural communication with people from different cultures around the world. As noted by DeWitt and Alias (2014),

Social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter provide a unique opportunity for students to interact with individuals from different cultures and engage in authentic intercultural communication that is often difficult to replicate in the traditional classroom setting. (p. 23)

This authentic communication can lead to a deeper understanding and appreciation of different cultures, as well as the development of intercultural communication skills.

It is important to note, however, that the use of SM in promoting intercultural communicative competence should be done with caution. As noted by Huang and colleagues (2018), “While social media has the potential to enhance intercultural communication skills, it can also lead to misunderstandings and miscommunication if not used appropriately” (p. 47). Therefore, it is important for educators to provide guidance and support to students in using social media for intercultural communication.

1.4.3. Limitations of Using SM in Intercultural Communication

While SM can be an effective tool in promoting ICC, there are also some limitations to its use in this context. One limitation is that SMP are not always reliable or accurate sources of information. As noted by Kim and Solomon (2017), “information on social media is often biased, incomplete, or based on personal opinions, and therefore should be used with caution” (p. 23).

Another limitation is that SM may not always allow for authentic intercultural interactions. As noted by Lin and Lan (2015), “the online nature of social media may hinder authentic communication and cultural exchange, as users may present idealized or stereotyped versions of themselves and their culture” (p. 141). This can lead to misunderstandings or reinforce stereotypes, rather than promoting genuine intercultural understanding.

Additionally, the use of SM in intercultural communication may require a certain level of digital literacy and access to technology, which may not be available to all students. As noted by Sercu (2013), “the effectiveness of using digital media for intercultural communication is influenced by factors such as access, availability, and digital literacy” (p. 295).

Finally, it is important to consider issues of privacy and security when using SM for intercultural communication. As noted by Kim and Solomon (2017), “privacy settings on social media platforms are often confusing or insufficient, leaving users vulnerable to cyber bullying, stalking, and identity theft” (p. 23).

Despite these limitations, SM can still be a valuable tool in promoting ICC, as long as these limitations are acknowledged and addressed.

Conclusion

ICC is an essential skill that students must develop to succeed in a globalized society. Various models of ICC have been proposed, including those by Hymes, Byram, and Bachman. These models outline the various competencies, skills, and knowledge required for effective intercultural communication. In education, ICC can be taught through various methods, including experiential learning, role-playing, and cultural immersion. The use of SM has also been suggested as an effective tool for promoting ICC. While there are limitations to using SM in ICC, such as the potential for miscommunication and cultural misunderstandings, it has been shown to be effective in enhancing intercultural communication skills. Thus, developing ICC is essential for students to navigate the challenges and opportunities presented by an increasingly diverse world. Education plays a crucial role in teaching ICC, and the use of SM can further enhance the development of ICC.

Chapter Two
Research Methodology, Data analysis,
Interpretation and Discussion of the Results

Introduction

This Chapter is devoted to highlight the methodology used in this research. It is divided into two parts, the first part provides a thorough explanation of the research design, including where the research took a place, the sample and the research instruments. Using a mixed method, data were compiled through questionnaires for both students and teachers. The second part is devoted to data analysis and interpretations of the gathered data from the previous mentioned tools, followed by the discussion of the results.

2.1. Research Methodology and Design

In this research a descriptive design was opted. A mixed method was used in order to indentify the enhancement of Intercultural Communicative Competence in EFL classrooms through the use of Social Media. Quantitative methods were used to gather qualitative data from both students and teachers of the English department at Chadli Ben Djedid University.

2.2. Research Location

This research was conducted at the English department of Chadli Ben Djedid University of El-Tarf. The questionnaires were given to the delegates of each class so they can distribute them among their classmates. However, there were some left copies due to the absence of the students at that period (the week right before the spring holidays). Fortunately, the rest of the questionnaires were sent to the students through their Social Media groups and their answers were delivered in due time. The majority of teachers' questionnaire was sent via email.

2.3. Population and Sample

The population that is targeted in this study are 367 EFL students and 17 teachers of the English department at Chadli Ben Djedid University of El-Tarf during the academic year 2022/2023. For the sample of this study, specific groups of 15 of both License (1st, 2nd, 3rd year) and Master1 students were selected, (Master 2 students weren't included to avoid any bias since they were only one group). However, the participants were selected randomly from the population of each level. This makes them 60 participants in total. For the teachers, the questionnaire was sent via email to all 17 teachers of our department, and 13 of them have answered, 4 teachers were not cooperative, they replied saying that they will but did not.

2.4. Research Instruments

The primary data for this study were gathered through the use of semi-structured questionnaires for both students and teachers. The purpose of this study is to check the enhancement of Intercultural Communication Competence (ICC) through Social Media (SM) in EFL classrooms. Therefore, these questionnaires were conducted for the purpose of answering our research questions to confirm or to refuse the research hypotheses.

2.4.1. Description of Students' Questionnaire

As it was already mentioned in the Population and Sample (2.2), 15 students from each level (1st, 2nd, 3rd year and Master1) were asked to answer a generalized questionnaire that was composed of 13 questions. It was divided into three sections, as follows:

Section One (Q: 1-2): Was about students' personal information, Q1 (close-ended) was about the students' level and Q2 (close-ended) was about their gender. The reason behind those questions was to check students' ICC and the difference in the usage of SM between genders and in different academic levels.

Section Two (Q: 3-4-5): Was done to know more about students' SM preferences in terms of how much time they spend on it (Q3 close-ended), which SM platforms are more used by them (Q4 multiple choice) and for what reasons they use them (Q5 multiple choice).

Section Three (Q: 6-7-8-9-10-11-12-13): The first 7 questions were close-ended, and the last one was open-ended. In this section, students were asked whether they are satisfied with their ICC level or not (Q6). Then, both SM and ICC were linked by asking questions that could state the different occasions where students' ICC is put in action online, and checking whether they face any problems while interacting with foreigners online (Q7), their opinions were also checked about the contribution and the role of SM in raising the awareness of ICC level in EFL classrooms and what do they think about using SM as an authentic material and implementing it in EFL classrooms (Q 8-9-10-11-12). The last question (Q13) was asked specially for students to add if they have any suggestions on how to enhance ICC.

2.4.2. Description of Teachers' Questionnaire

The teacher's questionnaire was an essential element of our study; it was designed to gain valuable insights from 17 teachers regarding their perceptions and practices in enhancing students' ICC through the use of SM. This questionnaire consisted of 13 questions organized within 3 sections, as follows:

Section One (Q: 1-2-3): Was about teachers' personal information, Q1 (close-ended) was about teachers' educational qualifications. Q2 (open-ended) was about how long they have been teaching English at the University. Q3 (close-ended) was about the modules that are related to culture they have taught (multiple choice question).

Section Two (Q: 4-5-6-7-8): Was concerned with Social Media preferences, Q4 (open-ended) was about teachers' attitudes towards using technology inside the classrooms. Q5 (close-ended) was to determine which SM platforms are more preferable for teachers to use (multiple choice question). Q6 and Q7 (close-ended), these "Yes" or "No" questions were put to check if the teachers actually interact with their students' through SM, and if they are "For" or "Against" the use of technology inside the classrooms.

Section Three (Q: 9-10-11-12-13): Was about Intercultural Communicative Competence, both Q8 and Q9 (close-ended) are "Yes" or "No" questions used to "Approve" or "Refuse" a statement and a suggestion with a "Justifications space" right below each question. Q10 (open-ended) was about how the teachers evaluate their students' Communicative Competence. Q11 and Q12 (close-ended), these likert-scale questions were asked to indicate teachers' "Agreement" or "Disagreement" of a statement and a suggestion about linking SM with ICC with a "Justification space" right below each question. Q13 (open-ended) was to allow teachers to share their thoughts, insights, and opinions about the suggestion that was proposed regarding the potential of online forums with international English language learners and teachers to foster intercultural understanding and address cultural misunderstandings. The last point was to leave the teachers the opportunity to share any personal comments, suggestions or opinions regarding the research topic.

2.5. Data Analysis

2.5.1. Analysis of Students' Questionnaire:

Analysis of the retrieved questionnaire provided the following answers:

Section 01: Personal Information

Question 01: Student's current level

The first question was about students' current level, since the questionnaire was presented to 15 student of each of the four mentioned levels, this question was to help in organizing the collected questionnaires.

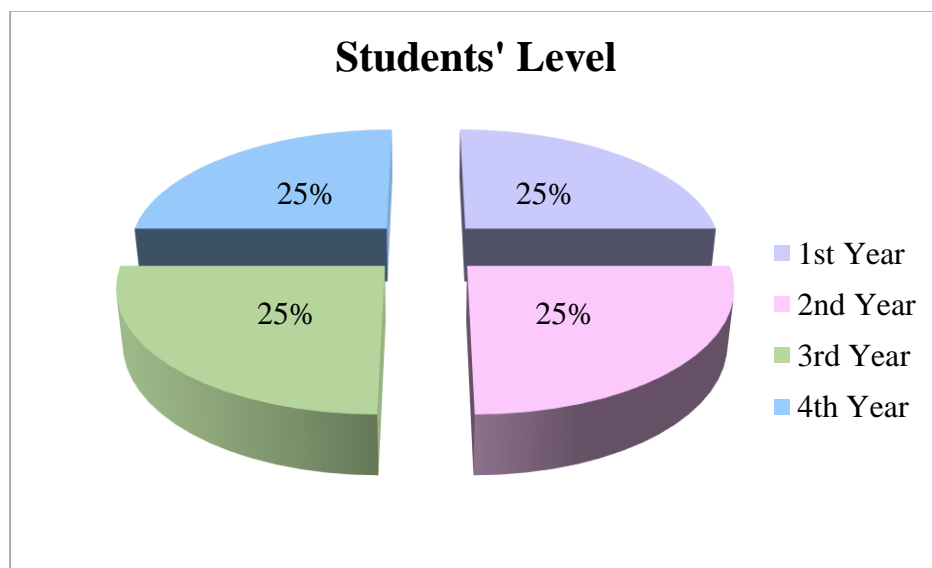


Figure 01: Students' Current Level

The results in Figure (01) show that the participants of this questionnaire were divided as follow: 15 students (25%) from each level (1st year, 2nd year, 3rd year and Master 1).

Question 02: Students' Gender

The second question was about students' gender (Male/Female).

Table05.

Students' Gender of Each Level

1 st Year	2 nd Year	3 rd Year	Master 01	Total
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	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Female	08	53.33	13	86.66	11	73.33	07	46.66	39	65
Male	07	46.66	02	13.33	04	26.66	07	46.66	20	33.33
Not Answered	00	00	00	00	00	00	01	1.66	01	1.66

As it is shown in Table 01, the respondents of this questionnaire in total were mostly females 39 (65%), whereas the males were 20 (33.33%), and 1 participant (1.66%) did not answer. In details, first year students were 8 (53.33%) females and 7 (46.66%) males. For second year, 13 (86.66%) were females and 2 (13.33%) males. For third year, 11 (73.33%) were females and 4 (26.66%) males. And finally, Master 1 students were 7 (46.66%) females, 7 (46.66%) males and 1 (1.66%) student did not answer.

Section Two: Social Media Preferences

Question 03: How often do you use Social Media?

This question was designed to reveal the average usage of Social Media by students along with their level.

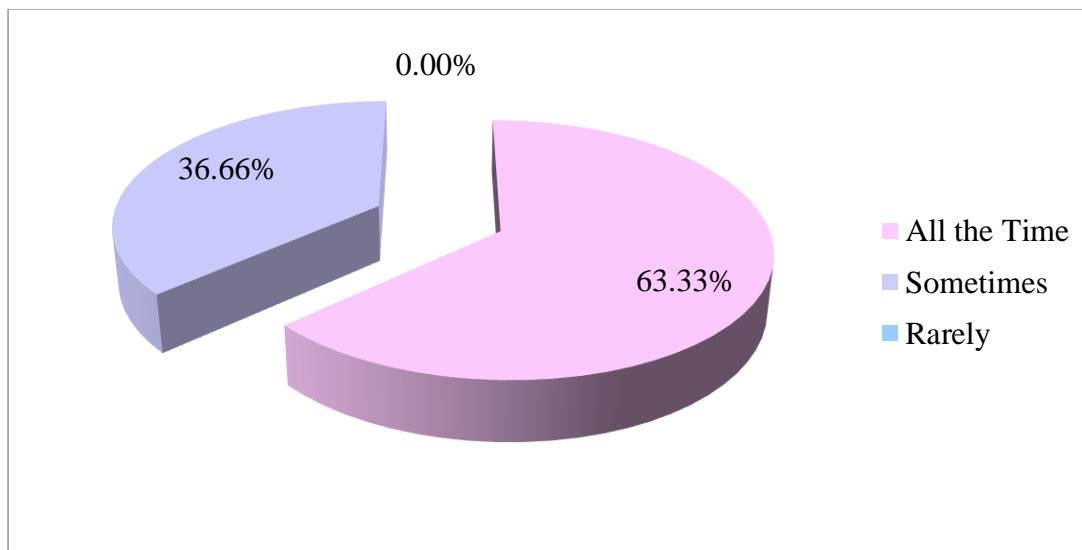


Figure 02: Students' Time Spent on SM

As it is shown in Figure (02), the results indicate that a majority of the students, 38 (63.33%), use SM "All the Time," while 22 (36.66%) use it "Sometimes." Interestingly, none of the students (0.00%) reported using social media "Rarely."

Question 04: Which Social Networking Platforms do you personally prefer to use?

This question aimed to reveal the most type of Social Media platforms students preferred using. (Multiple choices were allowed)

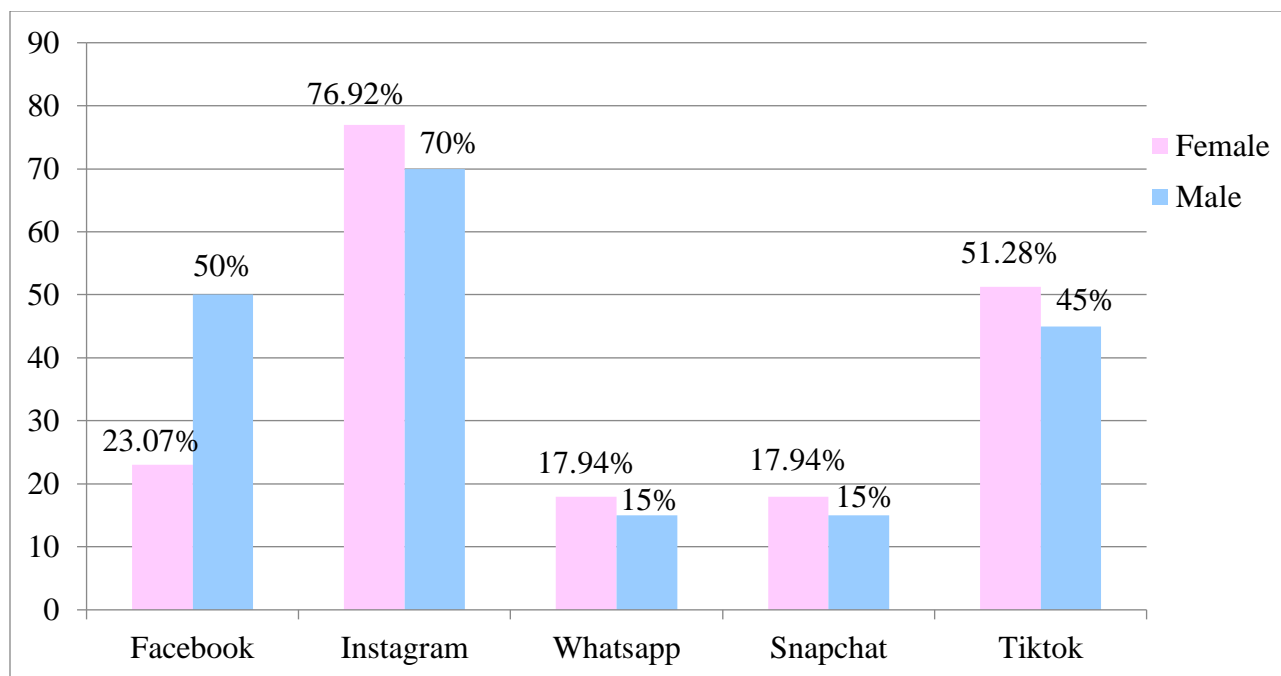


Figure 03: Students' Preferred SMP

The statistics presented in Figure (03) are based on the total number of female participants (39) and male participants (20). Among the social media platforms mentioned, Facebook was the preferred choice of 20 (33.33%) students, with 9 (23.07%) females, 10 (50%) males, and 1 (1.66%) participant whose gender was unknown. Instagram emerged as the most popular platform, chosen by 45 (75%) students, including 30 (76.92%) females, 14 (70%) males, and 1 (1.66%) participant whose gender was unknown. Both Whatsapp and Snapchat were selected by 10 (16.66%) students, with 7 (17.94%) females and 3 (15%) males each. Tiktok, on the other hand, was chosen by 29 (48.33%) students, comprising 20 (51.28%) females and 9 (45%) males.. 8 (13.33%) students, 5 (12.82%) females and 3 (15%) males, added to the “other” choice:

- 4 (6.66%) added Telegram. 1 (2.56%) female and 3 (15%) males.
- 1 (2.56%) female added YouTube.

- 2 (10%) males added Twitter.
- 1 (5%) male added GoodReads.

Question 05: For what purpose do you use SM?

This question aimed to know what purposes students use SM for according to their genders. (Multiple choices were allowed).

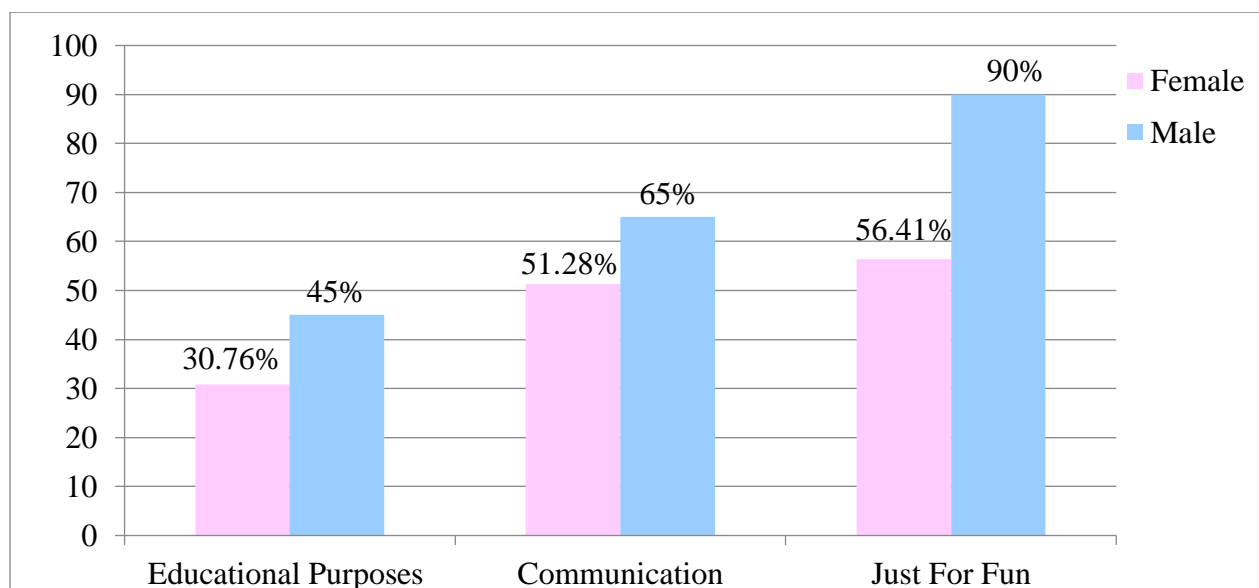


Figure 04: Students' Purpose for Using SM

Just like in Figure (03), the statistics depicted in Figure (04) were done based on the total number of female participants (39) and male participants (20). Out of the total participants, 21 (35%) students indicated that they use SM for “Educational Purposes”, with 12 (30.76%) females and 9 (45%) males reporting such usage. In terms of communication, 34 (56.66%) students, including 20 (51.28%) females, 13 (65%) males and 1 (1.66%) participant whose gender was unknown, stated that they use SM for “Communication”. Furthermore, 40 (66.66%)

students, consisting of 22 (56.41%) females and 18 (90%) males, mentioned that they use SM “Just for Fun”.

Section Three: Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)

Question 06: Are you satisfied with your ICC level?

This “Yes” or “No” question aimed to know whether students were satisfied with their ICC level or not according to their level (school year).

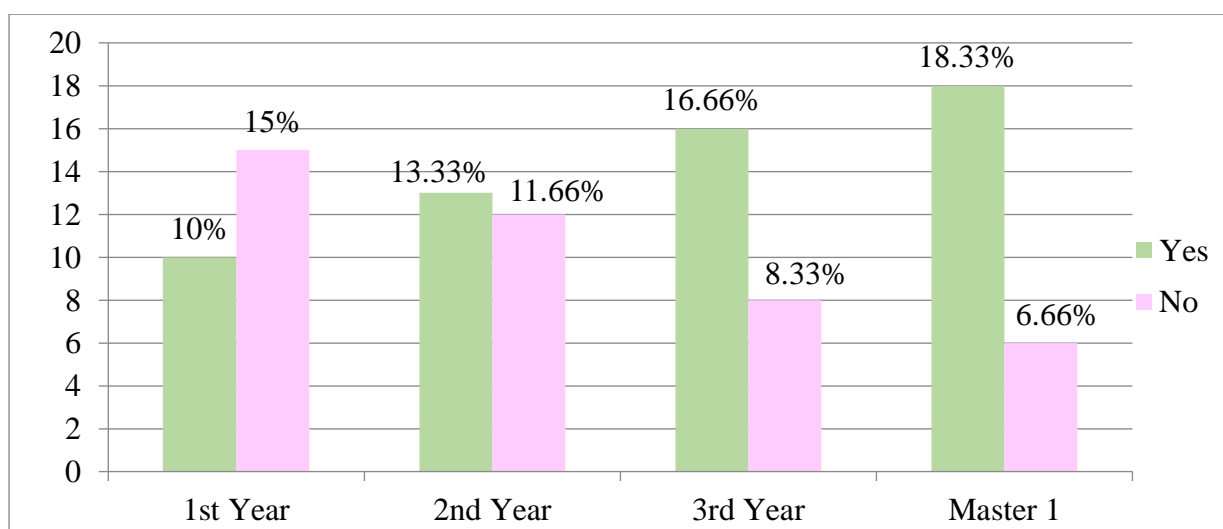


Figure 05: Students' Satisfaction of their ICC Level

According to the answers gathered from the students in Figure (05), 35 (58.33%) students answered with “Yes” they are satisfied with their ICC level and 25 (41.66%) students answered “No”. 6 (10%) of first year students answered “Yes” while 9 (15%) answered “No”. 8 (13.33%) of second year students answered “Yes” while 7 (11.66%) answered “No”. 10 (16.66%) of third year students answered “Yes” while 5 (8.33%) answered “No”. 11 (18.33%) of Master 1 students answered “Yes” while 4 (6.66%) answered “No”.

Question 07: Do you have foreign friends who have different cultures than yours?

➤ **If yes, have you ever found any troubles communicating with them?**

This “Yes” or “No” question aimed to know whether the students have foreign friends who have different cultures than theirs. And for those who choose “Yes”, they were asked if they have ever found any troubles communicating with them.

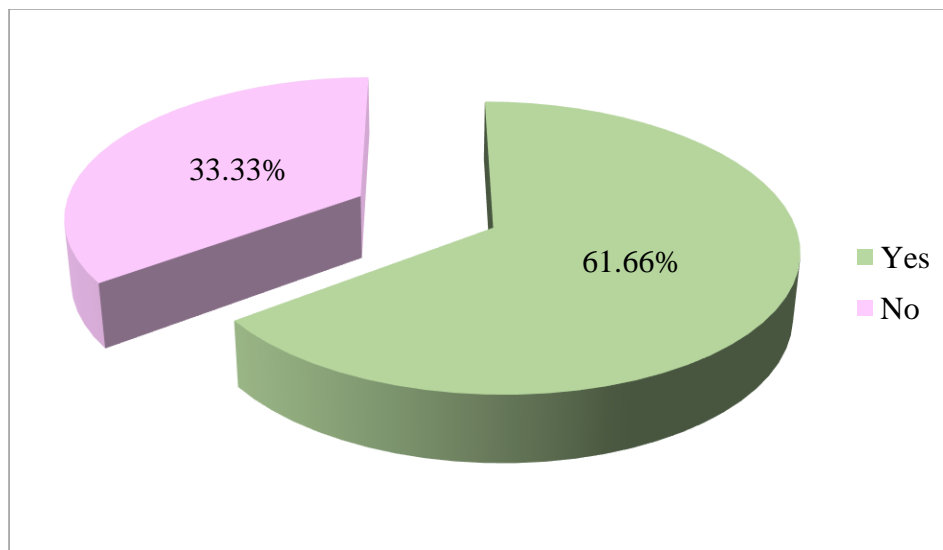


Figure 06: Students' Ownership of Online Foreign Friends from Different Cultures

As it is shown in Figure (06) above, 37 (61.66%) students answered “Yes” they have foreign friends from different cultures than their own, and 23 (38.33%) students answered “No”, they do not.

➤ Among the students who answered with “Yes”, 8 (21.62%) answered “Yes” they have found troubles communicating with them at some point, and the 29 (78.37%) students left answered with “No”.

Question 08: As an EFL learner, how is it important to raise the awareness of ICC's level in classrooms?

This question aimed to know what students from different levels think about the importance of raising the awareness of ICC's level in classrooms. (Three options were given)

- Crucial
- Important
- Not Important

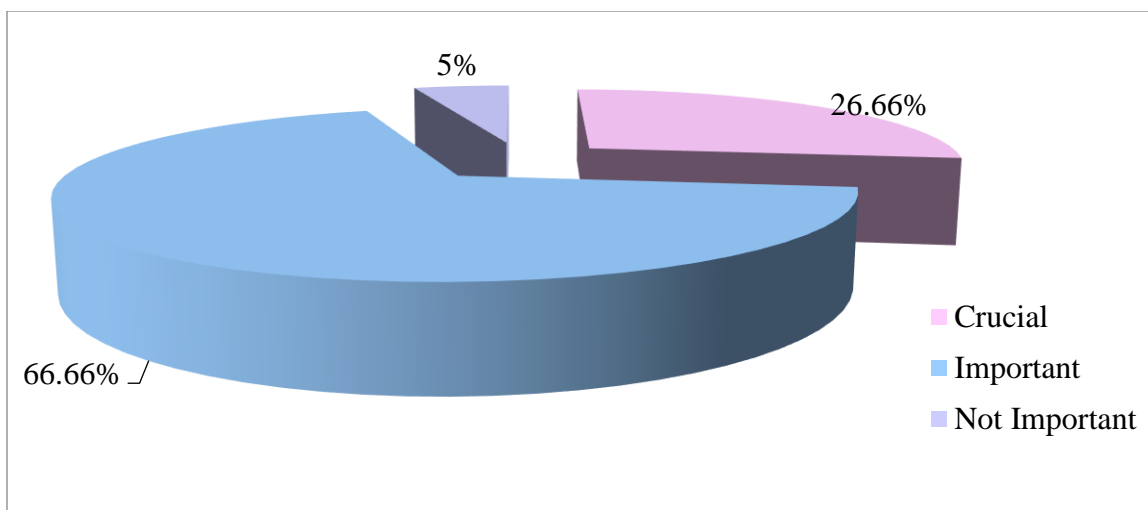


Figure 07: The Importance of Raising the Awareness of ICC's level

The results presented in Figure (07) indicate that a majority of 40 (66.66%) students answered "Important." Additionally, 16 (26.66%) students answered "Crucial," indicating a higher level of significance. On the other hand, a small proportion of only 3 (5%) students answered "Not Important." Furthermore, there was 1 (1.66%) student who did not provide an answer to this question.

Question 09: Did you learn new things about other culture through your use of SM?

This “Yes” or “No” question aimed to know whether students learnt new things about other cultures through their use of SM or not, in order to confirm or deny the effectiveness of the use of SM on students’ ICC level.

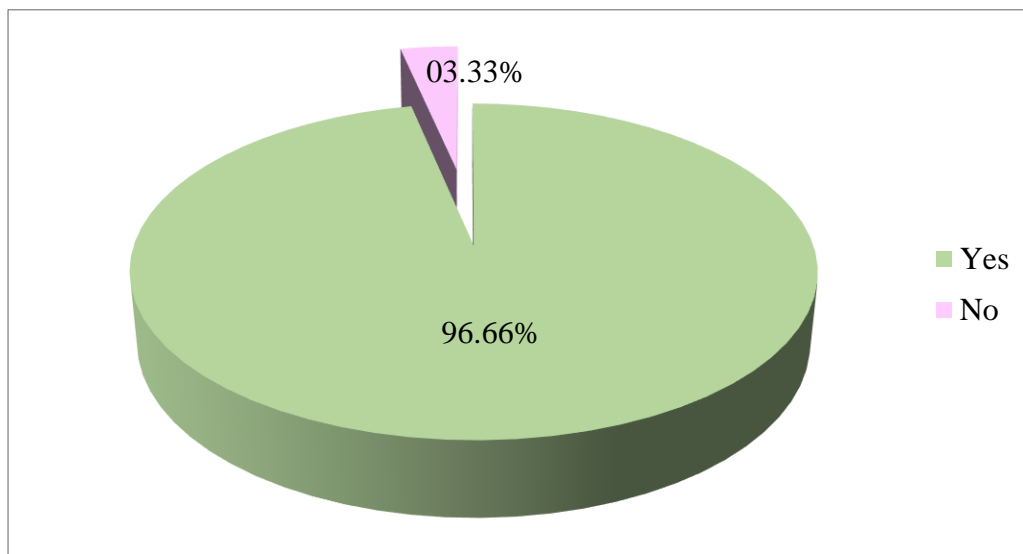


Figure 08: Students’ New Things learnt about other Cultures from SM

From the results from Figure (08) show that a significant majority of 58 (96.66%) students responded affirmatively “Yes”, indicating that they have indeed learnt new things about other cultures through their use of SM. Where only 2 (3.33%) students responded negatively “No”, suggesting that they have not acquired new knowledge about other cultures through SM usage.

Question 10: How much do you agree with following statement: “Raising the awareness of Cultural Differences minimizes misunderstandings between people from different cultures”?

This question aimed to see how much students “Agree” or “Disagree” with the previous statement, which confirms whether they find ICC is important or not.

It was provided with three choices:

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree

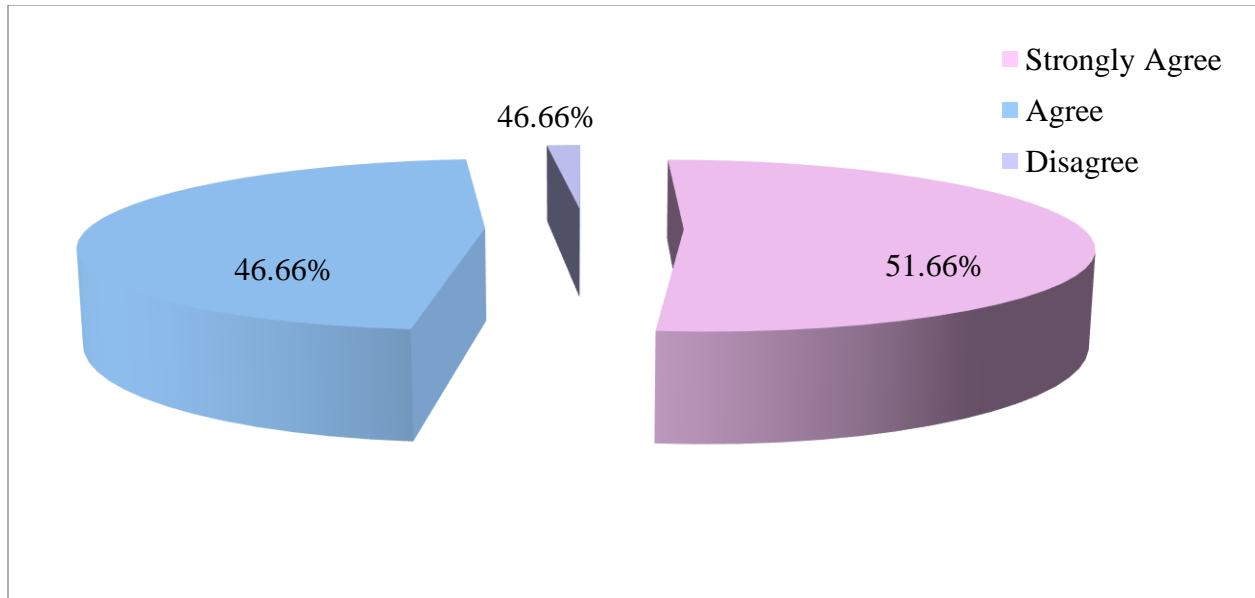


Figure 09: Students' Opinions about the Mentioned Statement (Question 10)

Based on the findings from Figure (09), a majority of 31 (51.66%) students answered “Strongly Agree” to the statement, indicating a positive response. Additionally, 28 (46.66%) students answered “Agree” while only 1 (1.66%) student answered “Disagree”.

Question 11: Do you find the videos you watch on SM shaping the culture of the person who posts them?

This “Yes” or “No” question aimed to know students’ opinions about the videos people post on SM and whether they shape their cultures or not, to confirm or deny that students actually learn new things about other cultures from SM.

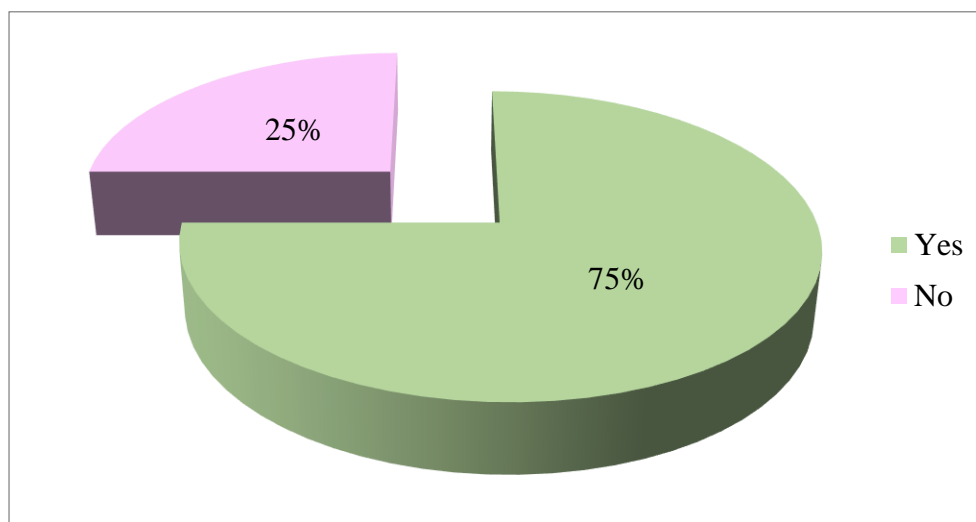


Figure 10: Students’ Thoughts of the Videos Shaping Cultures on SM

The results from Figure (10) show that the majority of 45 (75%) students answered “Yes” they do think that the videos they watch on SM shape the culture of the person who posts them, while 15 (25%) students answered “No”, they do not.

Question 12: In your opinion, how helpful is using SM as an authentic material to enhance ICC in EFL classrooms?

The students were asked this question to see to what extent they think SM as an authentic material to enhance ICC is helpful or not in EFL classrooms.

Three options are provided:

- Very Helpful
- Helpful

- Not Helpful

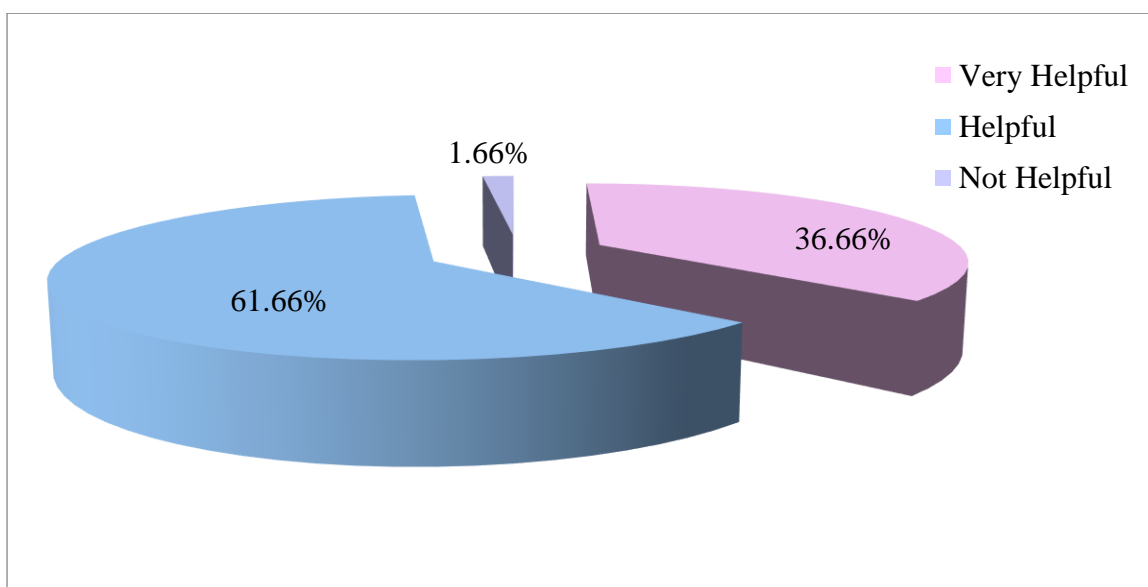


Figure 11: Students' Opinion of SM as an Authentic Material to Enhance ICC

The results from Figure (11) reveal that a significant proportion of 37 (61.66%) students selected the second option "Helpful". 22 (36.66%) students answered "Very Helpful". While only 1 (1.66%) student answered "Not Helpful".

Question 13: Do you have any suggestions regarding the enhancement of EFL learners' ICC? (Optional)

This open-ended question was optional; it aimed to get any fruitful ideas or suggestions regarding the enhancement of EFL learners' ICC. Most of the answers were as follow:

6 students suggested to: Create Applications or Websites that allow English students from different cultures to interact through audio/video calls.

4 students suggested to: Make friendships with foreign English students and text them regularly.

3 students suggested to: Students need more sessions in the modules that involve culture and cultural difference

2 students suggested to: Watch movies/videos that are based on real-life cultures in class.

2 students suggested to: Bring English students from other cultures to the University and have them exchange knowledge about their cultures.

1 student suggested to: Provide the advanced students with short-term scholarships or trips to visit places and see different cultures.

1 student suggested to: Make clubs and discussion groups with native speakers online academically.

Figure 12: Students' Suggestions regarding the Enhancement of EFL Learners' ICC

Only 20 out of 60 (33.33%) students answered this last question and gave their own suggestions which are categorized in Figure (12).

2.5.2. Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire

Analysis of the retrieved questionnaire provided the following answers:

Section One: Personal Information

Question 01: What is your educational qualification?

This question was about teachers' educational qualification; it aimed to provide valuable contextual information and enrich the analysis of the research findings.

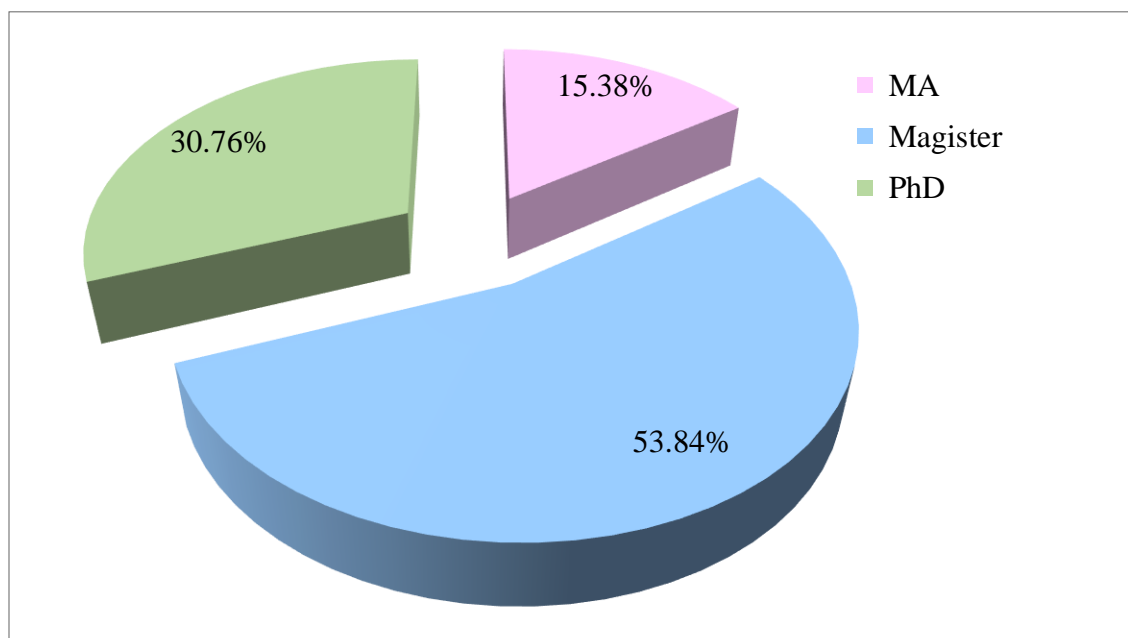


Figure 13: Teachers' Educational Qualification

According to Figure (13), it is shown that more than half of the teachers 7 (53.84%) hold “Magister Degree”, 2 of them added that they are currently “PhD students”. While 4 (30.76%) hold “PhD Degree”, and only 2 (15.38%) hold “MA Degree”, they also added that they are currently “PhD students”. That indicated that the teachers of Chadli Ben Djedid University were qualified and their answers were of significant importance and carried substantial credibility for this research.

Question 02: For how long have you been teaching English at the University level?

This question was designed to gain insights into the level of experience and expertise possessed by the teachers in the educational context.

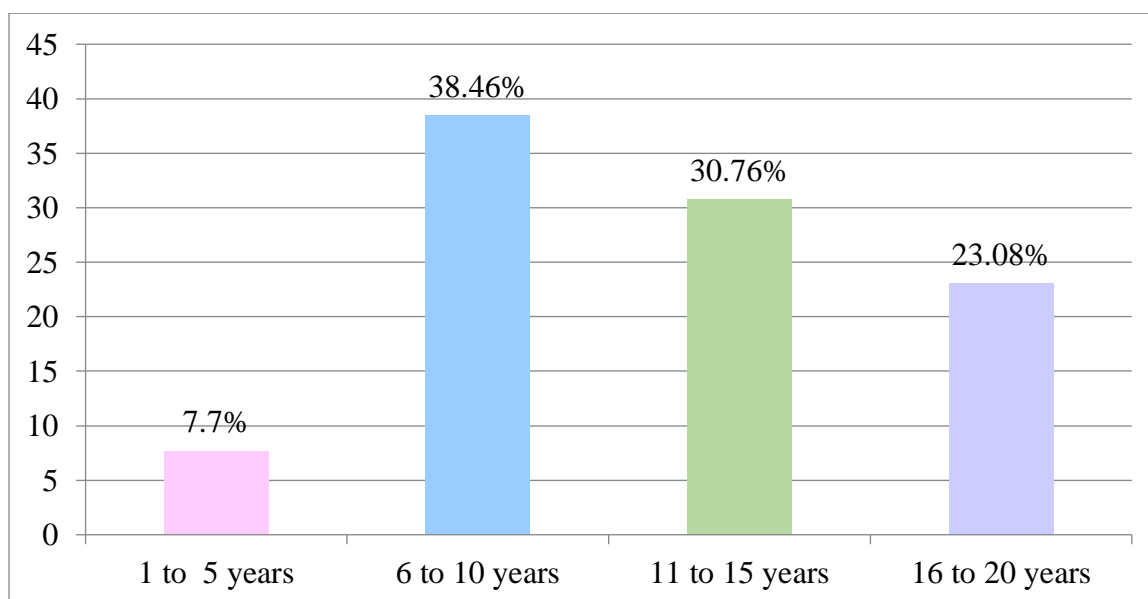


Figure 14: Teachers' Years of Teaching at the University

After categorizing the answers, the results from Figure (14) show that 5 teachers (38.46%) taught English from “6 – 10 years”, while 4 of them (30.76%) taught English from “11 – 15 years”, 3 teachers (23.08%) taught English from “16 - 20 years”, and only 1 teacher (7.7%) taught English from “1 - 5 years”. The expertise and qualifications possessed by these teachers lend weight and validity to their answers, further strengthening the findings of this study.

Question 03: In your years of expertise, have you taught?

This question aimed to know whether teachers taught these specific modules that are directly related to our research topic, this contributed the relevance of their answers to the research findings. (Multiple choices were allowed).

The choices were:

- Culture
- Civilization
- Interculturality
- None

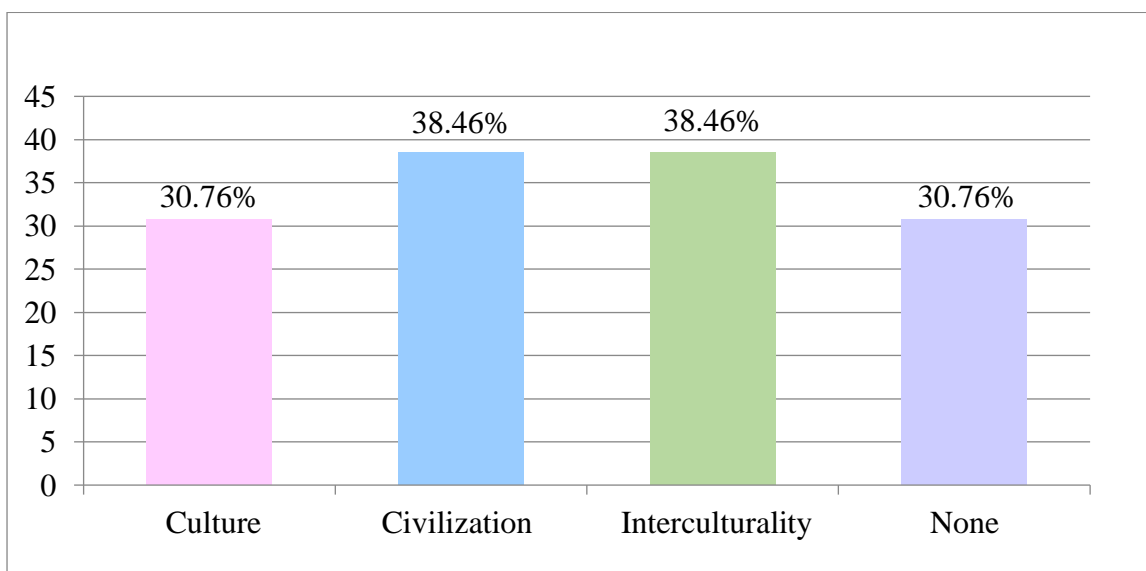


Figure 15: Modules Taught by the Teachers

The results shown in Figure (15) indicate that 5 teachers (38.46%) taught each “Civilization” and “Interculturality”, while 4 teachers (30.76%) taught “Culture” and 4 teachers (30.76%) taught “None” of the mentioned modules, however, they added that “Culture” has been integrated in their teaching of some modules like “Sociolinguistics” and “Oral Expression”. This confirmed that the teachers have experience in teaching modules that are directly related to this research.

Section Two: Social Media (SM) Preferences

Question 04: What is your attitude towards using technology in classrooms?

This question invited teachers to share their attitudes towards using technology in educational settings; its aim was to check the teachers' beliefs and perspectives regarding the use of technology.

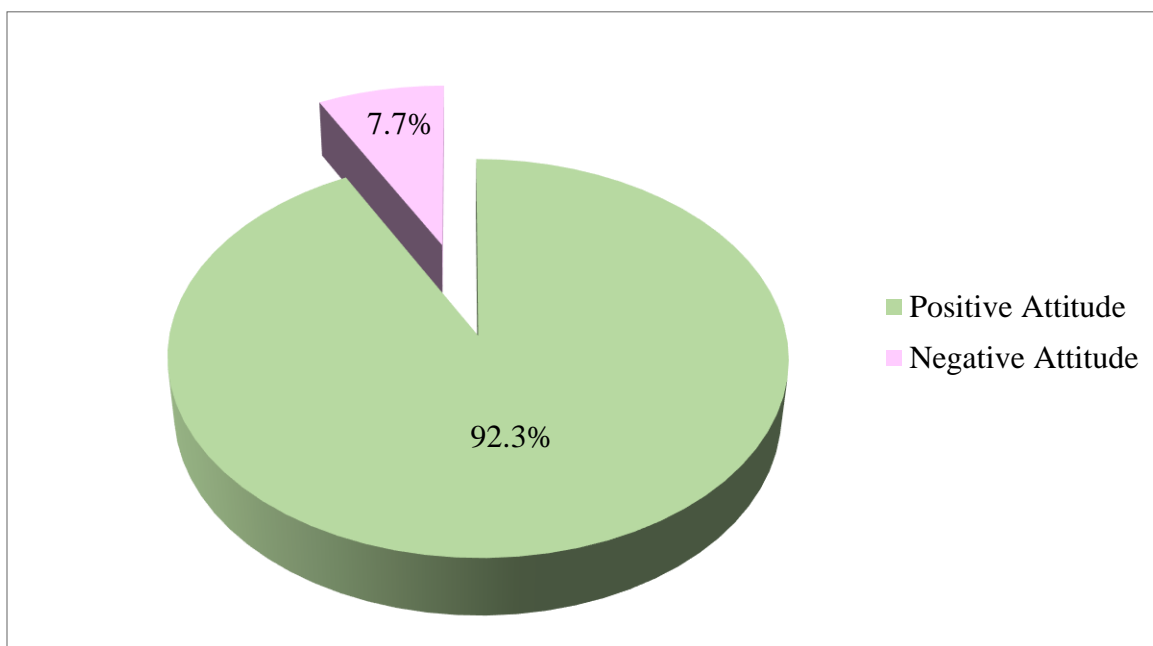


Figure 16: Teachers' Attitude towards using Technology inside the Classroom

The results from Figure (16) show that the majority of 12 teachers (92.3%) had “Positive Attitude” towards using technology inside the classroom because most of them indicated that they used their laptops, smart phones or laptops themselves, while only 1 teacher (7.7%) had a “Negative Attitude” towards it, noting that it might cause distraction for students.

Question 05: Which Social Networking Platform(s) do you personally prefer to use? (Feel free to select more than one)

This question aimed to reveal the most SM platforms teachers prefer using. (Multiple choices were allowed).

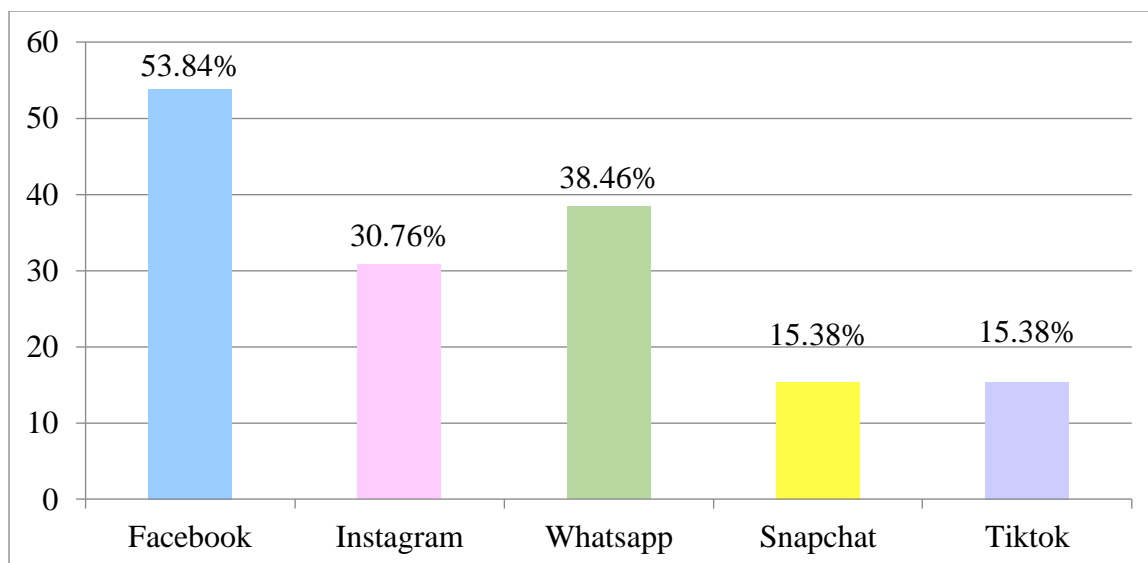


Figure 17: Teachers' Preferred SMP

In the Figure (17), it is shown that the majority of 7 teachers (53.84%) preferred using Facebook, 5 teachers (38.46%) preferred using Whatsapp, 4 teachers (30.76%) preferred using Instagram, and both Snapchat and Tiktok were preferred to be used by 2 teachers (15.38%) each. 8 teachers (61.53%) added to the “other” choice:

- 6 teachers (46.15%) added Telegram.
- 2 teachers (15.38%) added Youtube.

Question 06: Do you interact with your students through SM?

This question aimed to know whether teachers were “For” or “Against” interacting through SM with their students.

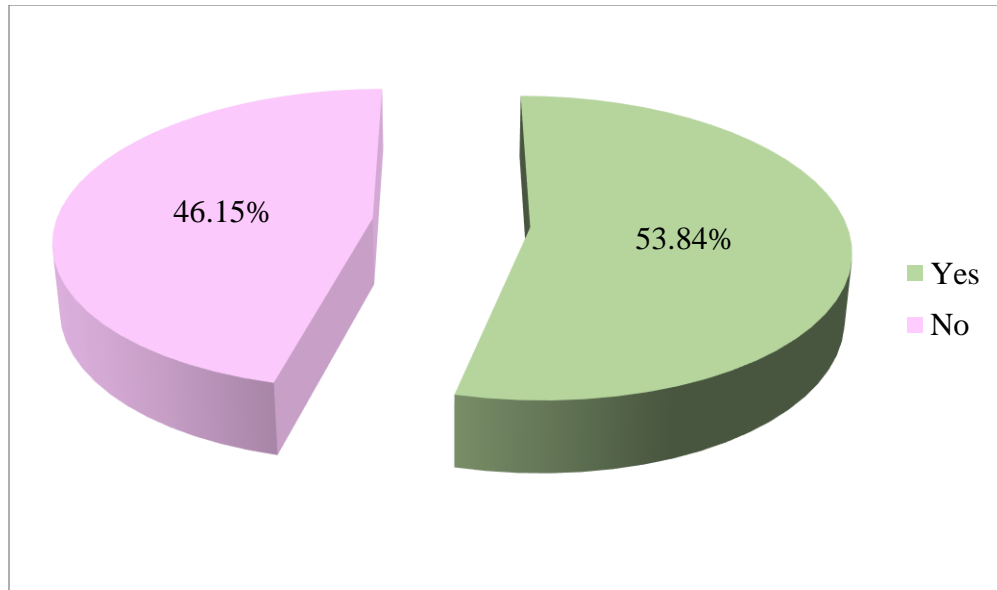


Figure 18: Teachers' Interaction with Students through SM

In Figure (18), it is shown that 7 teachers (53.84%) interacted with their students through SM, and 6 teachers (46.15%) did not, yet 4 of these teachers indicated that they only contact the delegates when necessary.

- **If yes, which level do you interact with through SM the most?**

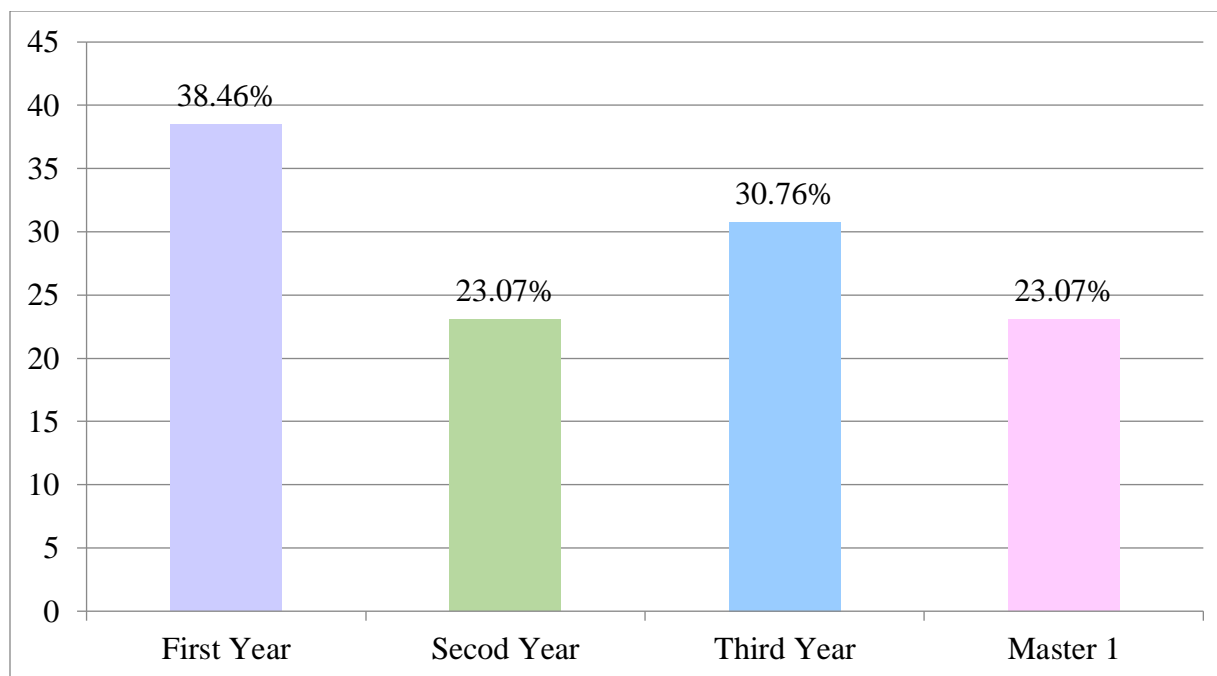


Figure 19: The Level Teachers interact with the Most

From Figure (19), teachers who said that “Yes” they did interact with their students through SM, 5 teachers (38.46%) interacted with first year the most. 4 teachers (30.76%) interacted with third year the most, and 3 teachers (23.07%) interacted with second year and Master 1 students each.

Question 07: Do you allow your students to use their smart phones/laptops inside the classroom (for learning purposes)?

This question’s aim was exploring the potential benefits of integrating smart phones and laptops as educational resources within the classroom environment, by inquiring about the allowance of their usage by students inside the classrooms.

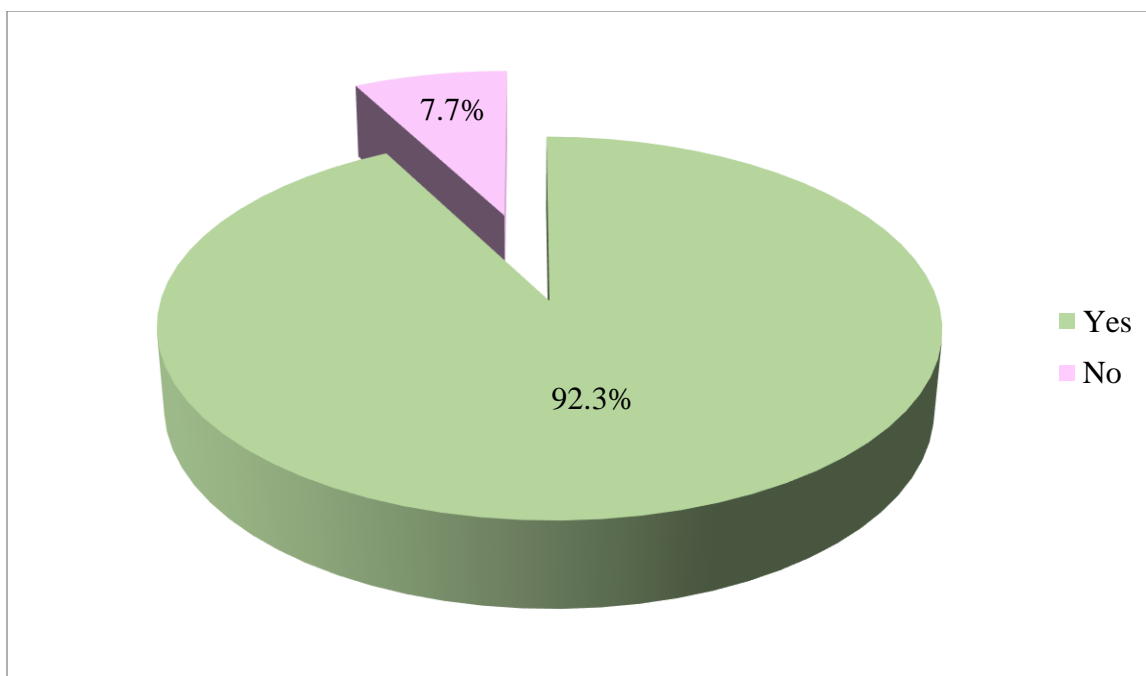


Figure 20: Teachers' Allowance of using Smartphone/Laptop inside the Classroom

In Figure (20), it is shown that 12 teachers (92.3%) picked “Yes” they allowed their students to use their smart phones/laptops inside the classroom, while only 1 teacher (7.7%) picked “No” (s)he did not allow his/her students to use them.

Section Three: Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)

Question 08: Do you agree with the following statement: “Learning a language means necessarily learning its culture?”

This question’s aim was seeking perspectives on the correlation between language acquisition and cultural understanding to gain insights into the importance of learning a language in conjunction with its associated culture.

All 13 teachers (100%) agreed (picked “Yes”) with the statement of “Learning a language means necessarily learning about its culture”.

Question 09: In your opinion, would integrating interculturality (as a separate module in the syllabus of each academic year, where each semester would be about different English speaking cultures) help raise the awareness of EFL learners' ICC?

This question aimed to get teachers' point of view towards the previously mentioned suggestion and whether it was beneficial to be applied or not.

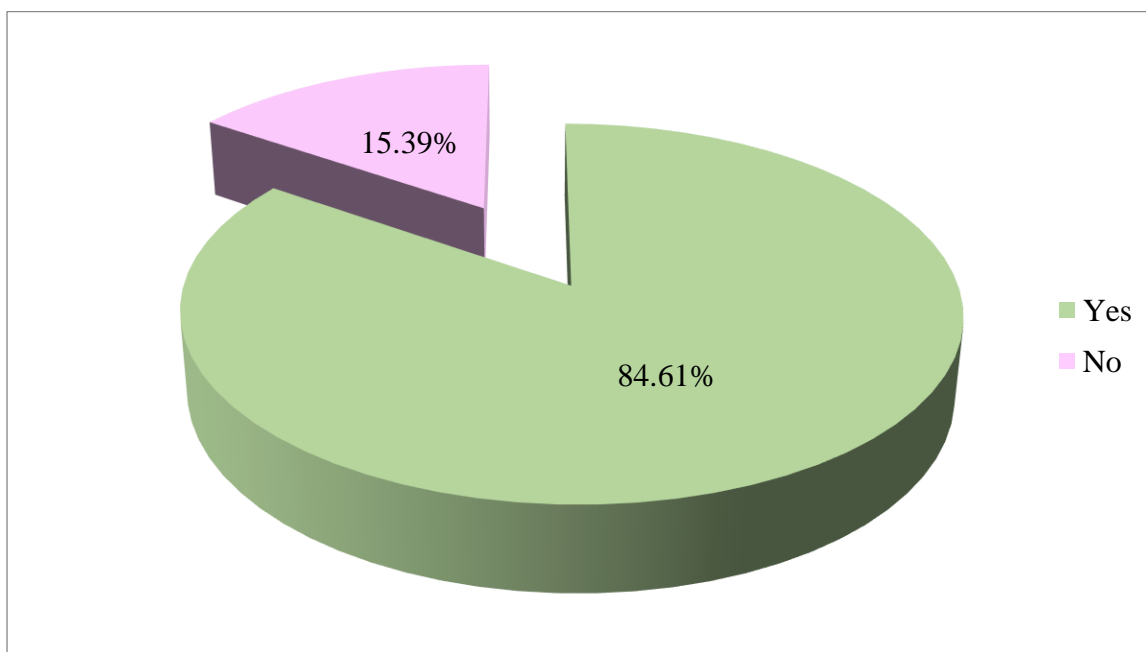


Figure 21: Teachers' Opinion of the Suggestion (Question 09)

Results from Figure (21) show that 11 teachers (84.61%) answered “Yes”, which means that they are proponents of our suggestion of “whether integrating Interculturality as a separate module in the syllabus of each academic year, where in each semester students deal with a different English speaking culture helps them raise their ICC awareness or not”. These teachers noted that it would be beneficial for students to enhance their ICC since they would be more exposed to real life situations and use the language in different contexts. 2 teachers (15.39%)

answered “No”, these opponents of the suggestion noted that it would be needless and unnecessary to apply that in every single semester of each academic year, they also added that 2 semesters (1 year) was more than enough, and if students were interested in cultures, they should make efforts on their own and learn about the cultures they are interested in.

Question 10: How do you evaluate your students’ communication competence?

This question’s main aim was to get an overview of teachers’ perspective of their students’ communication competence.

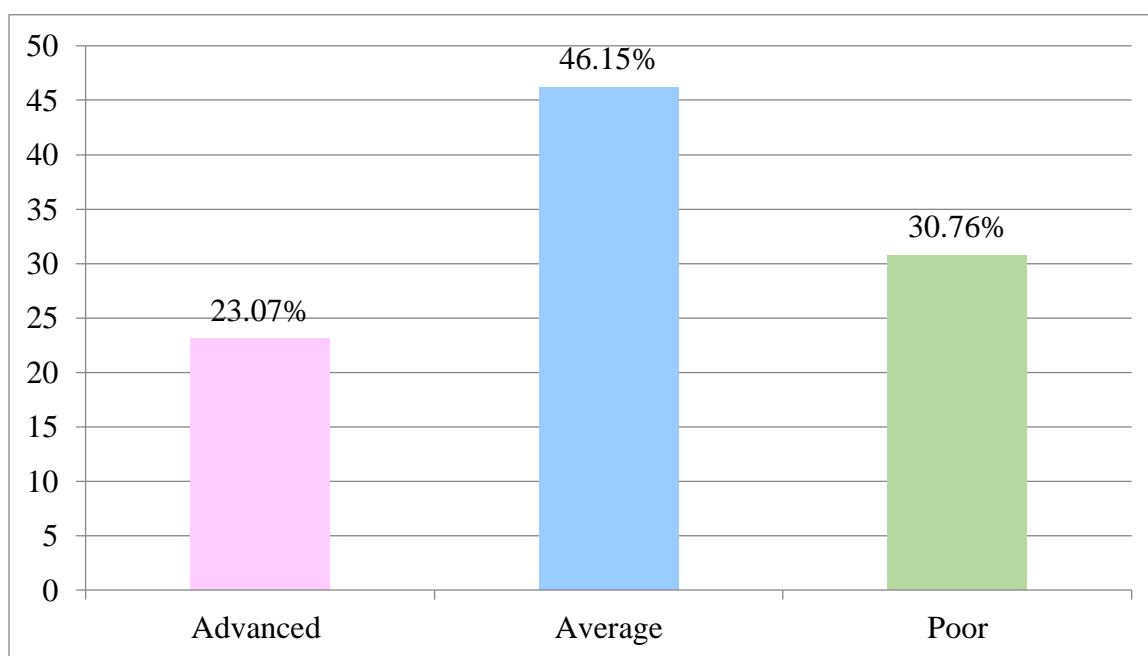


Figure 22: Teachers’ Evaluation of their Students’ CC

The results from Figure (22) show that 6 teachers (46.15%) evaluated their students’ CC as “Average”, 4 teachers (30.76%) evaluated it as “Poor” and 3 teachers (23.07%) evaluated it as “Advanced”.

Question 11: How much do you agree with that SM plays a massive role why students of these generations are more familiar with other cultures than the past generations?

This question aimed to gather insights into the extent to which teachers “Agree” or “Disagree” with the mentioned statement.

Three options are provided:

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree

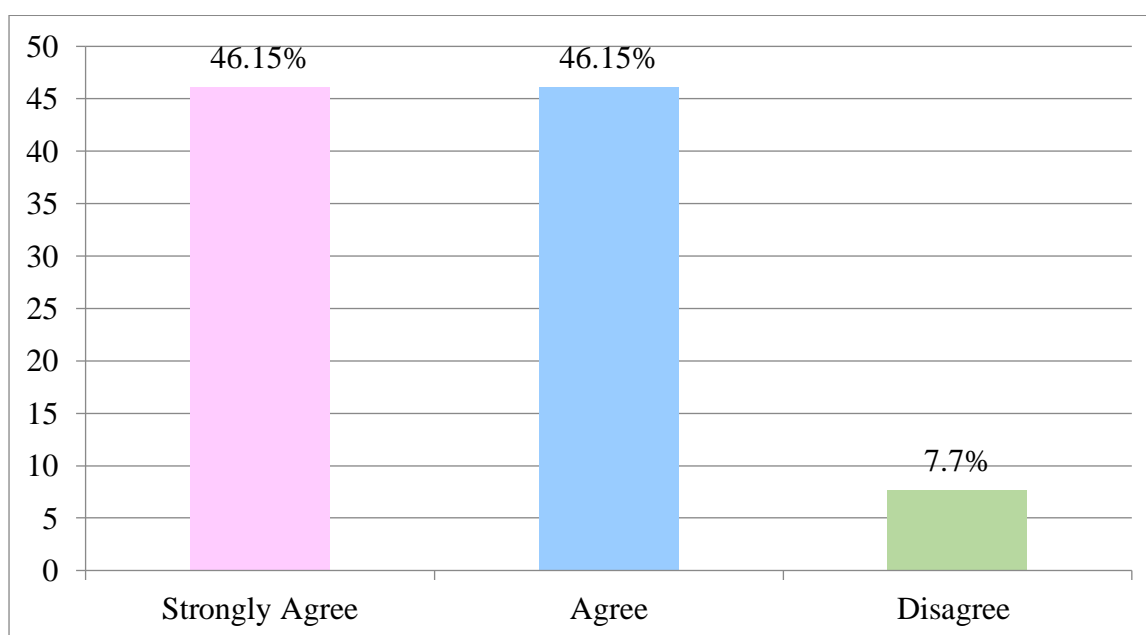


Figure 23: Teachers' Agreement with the Statement (Question 11)

The results from Figure (23) show that “Strongly Agree” and “Agree” were equally chosen by 4 teachers (46.15%) each, while only 1 teacher (7.7%) chose “Disagree” with the statement that we mentioned “SM plays a massive role why students of these generations are

more familiar with other cultures than the past generations”. For the teachers who chose “Strongly Agree” and “Agree”, they noted that students were daily following the SM which was beneficial in inferring the similarities and differences between cultures; they were more exposed to other cultures especially through the videos that show cultural differences, these videos were done in fun and interesting ways so people in general can watch the whole thing. On the other hand, the teacher who chose “Disagree” noted: “The new generation has not any knowledge about other cultures comparing with the past generations, they used to read books. The new generation uses technology for worthless things.”

Question 12: In your opinion, how helpful is using SM as an authentic material to enhance students’ ICC in EFL classrooms?

This question aimed to see to what extent teachers find SM helpful or not in EFL classrooms.

Three options are provided:

- Very Helpful
- Helpful
- Not Helpful

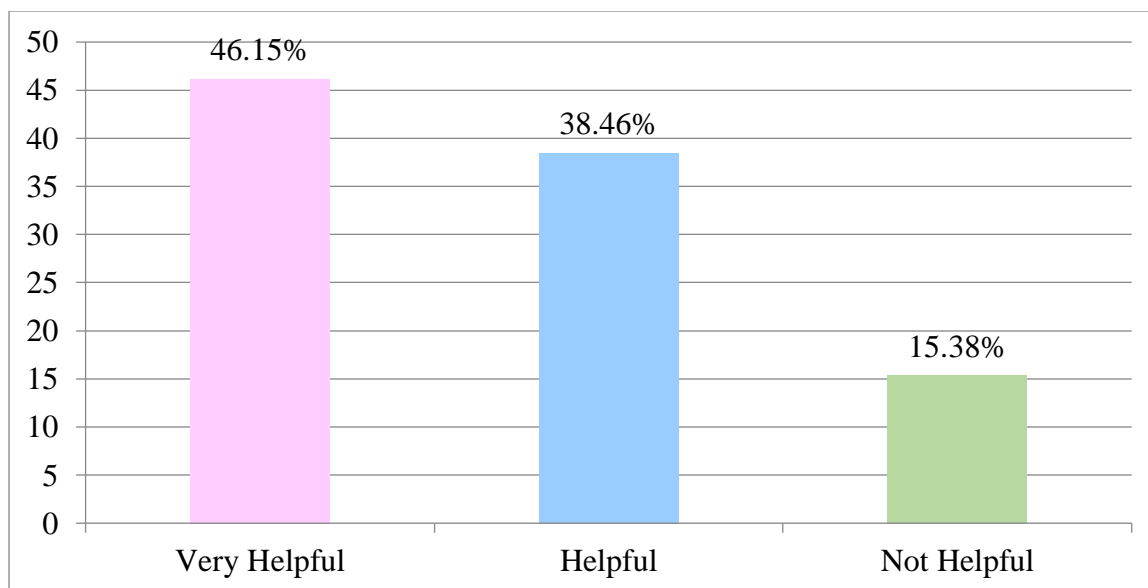


Figure 24: Teachers' Opinion about SM as an Authentic Material

As it is shown in Figure (24), 6 teachers (46.15%) chose “Very Helpful”, while 5 teachers (38.46%) chose “Helpful” and only 2 teachers (15.38%) chose “Not Helpful”.

Question 13: What do you think about making online forums with international English language learners and teachers in order to help overcome the misunderstandings caused by the lack of the sufficient knowledge of other cultures?

This question aimed to let teachers share their insights regarding the potential of online forums in fostering intercultural understanding and addressing cultural misunderstanding.

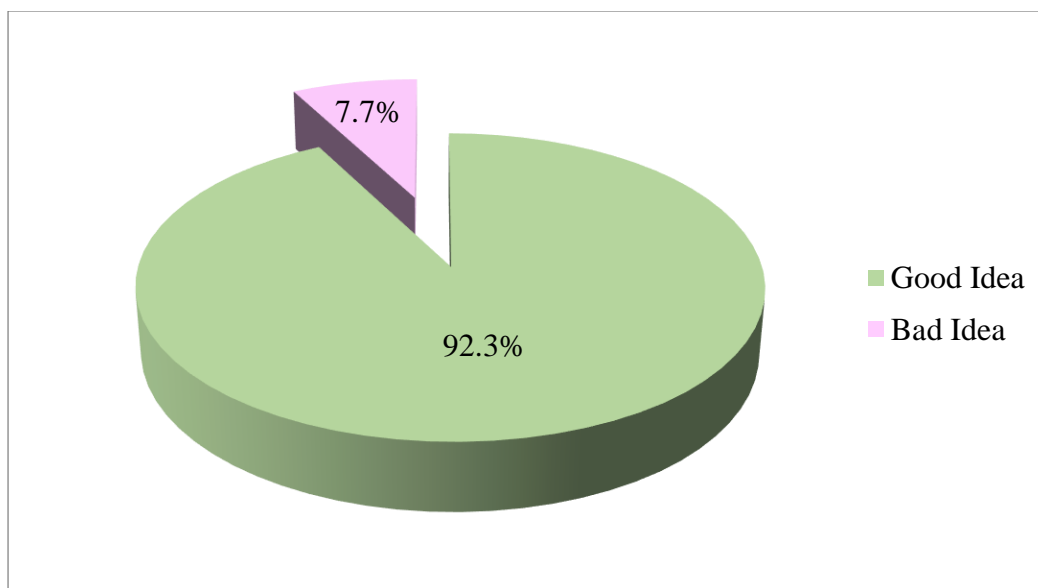


Figure 25: Teachers' Opinion of the Suggestion (Question 13)

The results from Figure (25) show that 12 teachers (92.3%) thought that the suggestion was a good, interesting and an impressive idea and they hoped it will be applied as soon as possible. while 1 teacher (7.7%) saw it as a “Bad Idea” noting that: “It is a waste of time and not necessary and students would feel forced to participate in such things.”

➤ **Feel free to leave any comments or suggestions you please:**

For this last point of the questionnaire, it was done an optional section for teachers to leave any comments or suggestions they want if they did not have the chance to explain anything in the previous questions.

"We can not boost students' ICC with the absence of a language laboratory and the basic means to effectively practice the language using authentic material and a myriad of activities that reflect real life situations within a motivational learning environment that boosts students' language mastery and confidence".

"Technology is getting indispensable these days, the globe is cherishing its integration for teaching/learning purposes and in many aspects of life. Unfortunately, not in the Algerian educational context. Therefore, we would like it if decision makers at the governmental level take the initiative to integrate it in the different instructional levels".

"I think that bringing authentic materials about cultures in classrooms guided by the teachers via overhead projectors or other tools would work great, but keeping students using their own smartphones in class to learn about cultures via SM it would be distracting for them. Yet, urging students to help themselves getting acquainted with intercultural materials from different SM sources outside the classroom is a great task to do".

Figure 26: Teachers' Comments and Suggestions

The Figure (26) shows that only 3 teachers out of 13 (23.07%) left comments and suggestions which were quoted the same way they wrote them in the questionnaire.

2.6. Interpretation of the Results

2.6.1. Interpretation of Students' Questionnaire

The findings from Section One of the students' questionnaire (Appendix A) reveal that:

- ✓ The majority of the participants are female, comprising (65%) of the total respondents. This proves that females are more collaborated in this study compared to male students. It is worth noting that this gender distribution have influenced the overall findings and should be taken into consideration when interpreting the results.

The findings from Section Two reveal that:

✓ There is a high prevalence and regularity of SM usage among the student, suggesting that SMP are deeply integrated into their daily lives and routines.

✓ There are variations in SMP preferences and usage based on gender. Instagram happens to be the most used SMP by the EFL students of Chadli Ben Djedid University of El-Tarf.

✓ The main reason why students use SM is for fun for both genders. However, male students tend to use it for educational purposes more than female students

The findings from Section Three reveal that:

✓ As the students progress to higher academic levels, their satisfaction with their ICC level increases. Master1 students, in particular, reported the highest satisfaction with their ICC level compared to Third year students, who expressed greater satisfaction than Second year students, and so on.

✓ Most students reported having foreign friends online from different cultures. Only few among those students reported experiencing troubles in communicating with their foreign friends at some point, while the majority did not encounter such difficulties.

✓ The presence of foreign friends even if they are online friends who live far away allows students to engage in cross-cultural interactions and navigate potential communication challenges.

✓ The majority of students consider raising awareness of (ICC) in classrooms to be important.

✓ Almost all students (96.66%) reported learning new things about other cultures through their use of SM

✓ Students are aware of the importance of cultural awareness in reducing misunderstandings. The high percentage of students affirming their agreement suggests a positive attitude towards the role of ICC in fostering effective communication and reducing conflicts.

✓ Students recognize and acknowledge the impact that videos shared on SM platforms can have on shaping and influencing cultures.

✓ Students recognize the value of SM as a resource that can support the development of ICC in the language learning process.

✓ SMP in language learning can effectively contribute to the enhancement of students' ICC.

✓ Students emphasize the need for technology-enabled platforms, cross-cultural friendships, targeted curriculum content and opportunities for immersive cultural experiences. Incorporating these suggestions into EFL teaching and learning practices can contribute to the enhancement of students' ICC and promote a deeper understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures.

2.6.2. Interpretation of Teachers' Questionnaire:

The findings from Section One of the teachers' questionnaire (Appendix B) reveal that:

✓ The majority of the teachers at Chadli Ben Djedid University possess high qualifications, suggesting their expertise and credibility in providing valuable information for this research study.

✓ The teachers have direct experience in teaching modules that are directly relevant to the research about ICC.

The findings from Section Two reveal that:

✓ Almost all teachers (92.3%) hold a positive attitude towards using technology in the classroom. The teachers expressed their willingness to incorporate technology into their teaching practices by using laptops/smart phones.

✓ Facebook and Whatsapp are the most preferred SMP among the teachers.

✓ The majority of the teachers (53.84%) are actively engaged with their students through SM. This indicates that SM has become a popular means of communication and engagement between teachers and their students.

✓ Teachers interact with First and Third year students on SM more than they do with Second and Master1 Students, Figure (19) reveals interesting patterns in their preferences. This finding suggests that as students progress in their studies, there may be an increased need for guidance, support, and communication with their teachers.

✓ Almost all the teachers (92.3%) allow their students to use smart phones/laptops inside the classroom for learning purposes. It suggests a shift in educational practices towards leveraging digital resources and students' familiarity with technology.

✓ The teachers highlight their strong belief in the intrinsic connection between language and culture. It signifies the recognition that language is not just a set of grammar rules and vocabulary, but a means of communication deeply rooted in cultural contexts and values.

✓ The teachers emphasized that SM provides a rich source of real life cultural content, allowing students to engage with diverse perspectives, languages and communication styles. They highlighted the interactive and dynamic nature of SM, which can facilitate meaningful intercultural exchanges and foster students' language skills in authentic contexts.

✓ The majority of teachers that incorporating SM as authentic materials can be a valuable tool for promoting ICC in EFL classrooms.

✓ Teachers have a positive outlook towards the role of SM in enhancing students' ICC.

✓ A significant majority of teachers (92.3%) view the suggestion of creating online forums with international English language learners and teachers as a positive and an impressive idea. They believe that such forums can help address misunderstandings caused by insufficient knowledge of other cultures and express their anticipation for its implementation. However, 1 teacher (7.7%) holds a contrary view, considering it a waste of time and unnecessary, suggesting that students may feel forced to participate.

✓ The teachers acknowledge the potential of SM as a valuable tool for fostering intercultural understanding and enhancing students' ICC.

✓ They perceive it as a beneficial resource and support the integration of online forums to bridge cultural gaps and promote meaningful cultural exchange.

From the comments and suggestions provided by the teachers in the last point of the questionnaire, several key points were highlighted:

✓ Supportive language learning authentic materials, varied activities and a motivating environment are a must to effectively boost students' ICC.

✓ Teachers desire technology integration in different instructional levels of the Algerian education system. It suggests that incorporating technology into education can have numerous benefits.

✓ Teachers believe that using tools such as overhead projectors or other resources guided by the teacher can be effective in enhancing students' intercultural understanding if they do not get distracted.

Overall, these comments and suggestions highlight the teachers' insights and concerns regarding the necessary resources, integration of technology, and effective use of authentic materials in promoting ICC among students. These perspectives provide valuable input for further considerations and improvements in the educational context.

2.7. Discussion of the Results

The findings from the students' questionnaire (Appendix A) shed light on their attitudes towards using SM for enhancing ICC. All students expressed that SM is deeply integrated into their daily lives and routines since not a single student answered "Rarely" to Q3 (Figure 02). The majority of students expressed positive attitudes towards the use of SMP for learning purposes (Figure 04). The vast majority of the students also expressed a positive attitude towards using SM as an authentic material to enhance ICC in EFL classrooms (Figure 11). These results validate the first hypothesis which is "Students show positive attitudes towards the enhancement of Intercultural Communicative Competence through SM".

The teachers' questionnaire (Appendix B) provided insights that the overwhelming majority of the teachers expressed a positive attitude towards the use of technology in the classroom (Figure 16), recognizing its potential to enhance language learning and ICC. They acknowledged that they use a variety of SMP (Figure 17), and that the majority of them do interact with their students through SM, especially with first and third year students (Figures 18, 19). Most teachers are for the suggestion of integrating "Interculturality" as a separate module in

the syllabus to raise students' awareness of ICC (Figure 21). The vast majority of the teachers acknowledged their agreement on that SM can be used as an authentic material to enhance students' ICC is helpful (Figure 24). These results validate the second hypothesis which is "Teachers believe that integrating SM into language teaching enhances students' ICC."

Conclusion

This chapter dealt with discovering students' attitudes and teachers' beliefs towards the enhancement of ICC through the use of SM in EFL classrooms of Chadli Ben Djedid University at El-Tarf. The data were gathered with mixed method from 60 students and 13 teachers from the English department. This chapter covered the research design, location, participants and data collecting instruments along with their analysis. In addition to the interpretations of the results obtained from the data analysis, and the discussion of both research hypotheses.



CHAPTER THREE
LIMITATIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the limitations, implications, and recommendations arising from the study investigating the integration of SM in language education to enhance ICC. While the study provides valuable insights into the benefits of SM, it is important to acknowledge the limitations that may have influenced the research outcomes. Understanding these limitations allows for a more comprehensive interpretation of the findings and provides directions for further research. Additionally, this chapter discusses the implications of the study's findings for both students and teachers, highlighting practical recommendations that can be applied in language education settings. By addressing these limitations and embracing the implications and recommendations, teachers can effectively enhance ICC among students through the integration of SM.

3.1. Limitations of the Study

- Sample size: The study may have been limited by the sample size of teachers involved, yet for the students, it was a bit difficult to deal with 60 students from different levels.
- Time constraints: Conducting a comprehensive study like Enhancing ICC in EFL classrooms through the use of SM requires sufficient time. Time constraints have limited the depth of data collection and analysis.
- Cooperation and willingness of participants: The effectiveness of this research relies on the active cooperation and willingness of both teachers and students. There were lacks of cooperation from some teachers which led to the late analysis of the teachers' questionnaire (Appendix B).

- Technology limitations: The study has encountered technological limitations in terms of the lack of the internet connectivity inside the university.
- The study would have been more relevant if there were some students at the University of Chadli Ben Djedid from other countries or at least completely different cultures.

3.2. Implications

3.2.1. Implications for Students

- Students should develop digital literacy skills to navigate SMP effectively and responsibly. They should be aware of privacy settings and critical evaluation of information to ensure a positive and safe online learning environment.
- Students should be more actively engaged with SMP for learning purposes, taking advantage of the opportunities they offer to interact with diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Students should reflect on their intercultural experiences and communication encounters through SM. This can involve self-assessment of their own cultural perspectives, biases and development of empathy towards others.
- Students should explore and learn about other cultures outside the classroom. This can involve following relevant SM accounts, joining language exchange programs and participating in online language learning communities.
- Students should be in an ongoing process of learning, EFL learners to be specific, they should never be satisfied enough with their levels because there is always something new to learn about a language.

3.2.2. Implications for Teachers

- Teachers should be always updated to new learning approaches and benefit from professional development programs like the ones focused on integrating SM into language education.
- Teachers should consider incorporating interculturality as a separate module in the syllabus, dedicating different semesters to studying various English-speaking cultures. This approach can provide students with a comprehensive understanding of intercultural dynamics and promote cross-cultural communication skills.
- Teachers should make use of authentic materials available like SMP to expose students to different cultural contexts, perspectives and communication styles.
- Teachers should create online forums that connect their students with international English language learners and teachers. This can serve as spaces for cross-cultural exchanges, overcome stereotypes and enhance students' ICC.
- Teachers should facilitate ongoing communication and support beyond the traditional classroom setting. By engaging with students through SMP, teachers can provide guidance, feedback and additional resources to enhance language learning and intercultural understanding.
- The right SMP to use: Teachers should not interact with their students through Telegram, as it shows in Figure 17, because it does not offer security in group-chat features. However, they should use more safe platforms like Facebook or Instagram and many others. They should also ask their class to choose the SMP they use the most before deciding which one to interact with them through, like the Question 04 in the Appendix A.

3.3. Recommendations

3.3.1. Recommendations for Students

- Students should actively participate in online communities and discussions related to language learning and intercultural communication. Join relevant groups, follow language-learning accounts, and interact with peers from diverse cultural backgrounds.

- Encourage students to explore and follow SM accounts and pages that share content from different cultures. This can include following cultural influencers, artists, musicians, and news outlets to gain exposure to different perspectives and cultural practices.

- Share experiences and insights: Encourage students to share their own cultural experiences, traditions and perspectives on SM. This can foster mutual understanding and promote intercultural dialogue among their peers.

- Be respectful and open-minded: Remind students to approach interactions on SM with respect, tolerance and open-mindedness. Encourage them to be mindful of cultural differences and to engage in constructive and empathetic communication.

- Reflect on intercultural experiences: Encourage students to reflect on their intercultural experiences and discussions on SM. They can write reflective blog posts, share their insights and engage in discussions with their peers to deepen their understanding of different cultures.

- Seek guidance from teachers: Encourage students to seek guidance and support from their teachers regarding the effective use of SM for language learning and intercultural communication. Teachers can provide recommendations and monitor progress.

3.3.2. Recommendations for Teachers

- Incorporate SM in lesson planning: Teachers should consider integrating SM activities and assignments into their lesson plans. This can involve using SMP to access authentic materials, facilitate discussions and promote intercultural understanding among students.

- Provide guidance on responsible SM use: Educate students about responsible and ethical use of SM. Teach them about digital citizenship, online safety and the importance of respectful communication when engaging with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Facilitate cross-cultural discussions: Encourage students to participate in online discussions or forums where they can interact with peers from different cultures. Teachers can facilitate these discussions by providing prompts, guiding the conversation, and promoting respectful dialogue.
- Share resources and provide recommendations: Teachers can use SM to share relevant resources, articles, videos and cultural materials with their students. This can enhance their understanding of different cultures and provide them with additional language-learning opportunities.
- Provide feedback and assessment: Incorporate SM activities into the assessment process to evaluate students' ICC. This can involve assessing their ability to engage in cross-cultural discussions and demonstrate cultural sensitivity.
- Stay updated with technology trends: Teachers should stay updated with current SM trends, features and platforms relevant to language learning and intercultural communication. This allows them to adapt their teaching strategies and make the most of available resources.

3.2.2.1. Lesson-Plan Recommended for Teachers

Preview (Introducing the Lesson)

For 5 minutes

- a. On the board, write the words: (Cultures, intercultural communication, role play, character, acting, roles).

- b. “Today’s lesson is to learn about different cultures and how to communicate with English speakers from different cultural backgrounds playing different roles in a role play...”
- c. Give an overview of what culture and intercultural communication are.
- d. “Today we are going to learn new things about different cultures of English speakers from different cultures in role plays”... “Let’s start with a warm-up exercise”.

Warm-up

For 10 minutes

- a. Ask students about their favorite novels that have been done as Role-plays. (As they do, the teacher writes two or three novels on the board).
- b. “Each two sitting together take roles as an interviewer and an interviewee as two people from different cultures, ask each other two questions only, then switch roles and re-ask the same questions (do not get the same answers of course). You have two minutes only to prepare so.”
- c. When time is up, ask students to start interviewing each other, write some of the new words on the board for others to understand or re-use them.

Main Activity (Group Task)

For 30 to 40 minutes

- a. “I tried to make this activity as fun as possible for you, so you will not be bored, and that you will be motivated enough to learn how to take roles in role-plays and use the most appropriate and suitable language to use in different contexts according to the cultural background of the person you are communicating with”.
- b. Show students videos adopted from different SMP (appropriate and accurate videos after checking them online before the lesson) of English speakers from different countries sharing

their cultural backgrounds (the cultures included in the activity in order to foster a sense of cultural understanding among them).

c. On the board, choose one culture-specific phenomenon such as traditional rituals, specific types of food, unique celebrations, traditional clothing, etc. and write them without mentioning to which culture they belong.

d. “Let’s pretend that you all are invited to an international social gathering of EFL and native English speakers in a different country, each one of you is going to be from a different nationality, like: United States, United Kingdom, Australia (Native English speakers), France, Germany, Russian, Spain, Italy, India, Egypt, Jordan, United Arab Emirates, Lebanon, etc. (EFL speakers).”

e. Give students small name-tag paper (sticky papers) with the role they will be playing (nationality) to put on their shirts so everyone else at the gathering will know where they are from and their cultural background except for themselves, yet they have to figure that out after they go around the gathering and communicate with the others, depending on how and about what the others will speak with them, they should find out from which country they are. As they do, they themselves need to speak to the other characters about a culture-specific phenomenon of their country according to what they read on their name tags.

f. To model this and facilitate things more for them, choose two or three students to come up to the board, give them name tags without them seeing, speak to each one of them about a culture-specific phenomenon according to their role (nationality), and let them see the difference and understand how the activity should take place.

g. Let them start the social gathering, and mingle with each other for 10 minutes

h. Meanwhile they are communicating with each others; take the opportunity to write all their names on the board leaving a space next to each one of them.

i. After the time is up, ask each one to write on the board the nationality they think they have next to their names, then check whoever got it right and praise them.

j. When the activity is finished, get some feedback from students on what difficulties they have found during the activity and whether they have any questions on how to communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds.

Reserve Activity

For the time left from the session (if there is any)

a. If time allows, and you still have extra minutes left from the main time of the session, let the students switch roles, and repeat the activity, each one will have a different name tag than they had in the first time.

b. Ask them about new things learnt about other cultures during this session of role-playing, as they do, write them on the board so everyone else can see them and copy them on their notebooks.

c. Ask students one by one about which cultures they got more interested in after the activity and whether they have other cultures in mind they would like to know more about to use in next sessions.

3.3.3. Recommendations for Curriculum-Makers

○ Integration of SM in Curriculum: The ministry should consider incorporating SM into the curriculum of language education programs. This can be done by providing guidelines and recommendations for teachers on how to effectively integrate SMP into their teaching practices.

- Technological Infrastructure: The ministry should invest in providing adequate technological infrastructure and resources in educational institutions. This includes ensuring reliable internet connectivity, access to devices and software platforms that facilitate the use of SM in language learning.
- Research and Evaluation: The ministry should encourage and support further research on the impact of integrating SM on ICC. This can involve funding research projects, establishing collaborative networks, and promoting the dissemination of research findings to inform future policies and practices.
- Policy Development: The ministry should develop clear policies and guidelines that address the ethical, privacy and safety aspects of using SM in language education. This can ensure the responsible and effective use of SMP while safeguarding the rights and well-being of students and teachers.
- Awareness and Support: The ministry should raise awareness among both language teachers and students about the potential benefits of integrating SM for ICC. It should also provide support mechanisms such as online communities and forums to help teachers navigate the challenges.

3.4. Recommendations for Further Researches

- Investigate how Social Media use influences students' motivation, engagement and cultural awareness.
- Assess the impact of Social Media on students' Intercultural Understanding and Communication Competence.
- Investigate the specific Social Media Platforms preferred by EFL students (Tiktok for example) to enhancing Intercultural Communicative Competence.

- Explore the challenges faced by EFL teachers when integrating Social Media and identify strategies to overcome these challenges effectively.
- Examine the potential benefits and drawbacks of using specific Social Media Platforms (Facebook for example) for Intercultural Communicative Competence development in EFL classrooms.
- Assess the long-term effects of integrating Social Media in EFL classrooms on students' Intercultural Communicative Competence. Track their progress and outcomes over an extended period (a whole semester).

Conclusion

This final chapter acknowledges the limitations of the study, emphasizes a number of implications and recommendations from both students and teachers in addition to recommendations for further researches derived from the findings. The study supports the use of SM in language education to enhance ICC in EFL classrooms. Students are encouraged to actively use SMP for language learning, and teachers are advised to incorporate SM into their teaching approaches.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

Please take few minutes to complete the following questionnaire. This questionnaire is designed as part of our master research entitled “Enhancing Intercultural Communicative Competence through the use of Social Media in EFL Classrooms”. The data gathered will be used in an absolute anonymity and confidentiality.

Section One: Personal Information

1. Gender: Male Female
2. Current Level: 1st Year 2nd Year 3rd Year Master 01

Section Two: Social Media Preferences.

3. How often do you use Social Media?

- All the time Sometimes Rarely

4. Which Social Network application do you personally prefer to use? (Free to select more than

1)

- Facebook Instagram Whatsapp Snapchat TikTok

* Other:

5. For what purpose do you do use Social Media?

- Educational purposes Communication Just for fun

Part Three: Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC).

6. Are you satisfied with your ICC level?

Yes No

7. Do you have foreign online friends who have different cultures than yours?

Yes No

➤ If yes, have you ever found any troubles communicating with them?

Yes No

8. As an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learner, how is it important to raise the awareness of ICC level in classrooms?

Crucial Important Not important

9. Did you learn new things about other cultures through your use of Social Media?

Yes No

10. How much do you agree with the following statement: "Raising the awareness about cultural differences minimizes misunderstandings between people from different cultures"?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree

11. Do you find the videos that you watch on Social Media shaping the culture of the person who posts them?

Yes No

12. In your opinion, how helpful is using Social Media as an authentic material to enhance ICC in EFL classrooms?

Very helpful Helpful Not helpful

13. Do you have any suggestions regarding the enhancement of EFL learners' ICC?

.....

Thank you for your cooperation.

Appendix B

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teachers,

Please take few minutes to complete the following questionnaire. This questionnaire is designed as part of our master research entitled “Enhancing Intercultural Communicative Competence through the use of Social Media in EFL Classrooms”. The data gathered will be used in an absolute anonymity and confidentiality.

Section 01: Personal Information

1. What is your educational qualification?

License MA Magister PhD

2. For how long have you been teaching English at the University level?

.....

3. In your years of expertise, have you taught?

Culture Civilization Interculturality None

Section 02: Social Media (SM) Preferences

4. What is your attitude towards using technology in classrooms?

.....

.....

.....

.....

5. Which social network application(s) do you personally prefer to use? (Feel free to select more than one)

Facebook Instagram Whatsapp Snapchat Tiktok

*Other:

.....

.....

6. Do you interact with your students through SM?

Yes No

➤ If Yes, Which level do you interact with through SM the most?

1st Year 2nd Year 3rd Year Master 01

7. Do you allow your students to use their smart phones/laptops inside the classroom (for learning purposes)?

Yes No

Section 03: Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)

8. Do you agree with the following statement: “Learning a language means necessarily learning its culture?”

Yes

No

*Please justify your choice:

.....

.....

.....

.....

9. In your opinion, would integrating interculturality as a separate module in the syllabus of each academic year, where each semester would be about different English speaking cultures, help raise the awareness of EFL learners' ICC?

Yes

No

*Please explain:

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.....

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.....
.....

10. How do you evaluate your students' communication competence?

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

11. How much do you agree with that SM plays a massive role why students of these generations are more familiar with other cultures than the past generations?

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree

*Please justify your choice:

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

12. In your opinion, how helpful is using SM as an authentic material to enhance ICC in EFL classrooms?

Very helpful

Helpful

Not helpful

13. What do you think about making online forums with international English language learners and teachers in order to help overcome the misunderstandings caused by the lack of the sufficient knowledge of other cultures?

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.....
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*Feel free to leave any comments or suggestions you please:

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Thank you so much for your time!