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## Internalization Perspective: Incorporating Intercultural Awareness in Language Teaching

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### Abstract

In the light of globalization and cross cultural interaction and exchange, supporting foreign language teachers and learners with intercultural awareness is the base for effective language learning and communication as well. The aim of the current study was to investigate EFL teachers' perceptions towards culture teaching and examine the impact of incorporating intercultural knowledge in EFL teaching on developing students reading attitude. It was predicted that university students receiving EFL training program based on incorporating cultural knowledge would develop positive reading attitude. Questions verbalized to accomplish the purpose of the study focused on: (1) exploring EFL teachers' perceptions towards incorporating cultural knowledge in classrooms. (2) exploring EFL teachers' perceptions towards the impact of culture teaching on students' language skills and attitude (3) Finding out differences regarding pre- and post-reading attitude scale of experimental group. A reading attitude scale for measuring students' reading attitude was used for data collection in addition to a questionnaire that investigated teachers' perceptions towards culture teaching. Results revealed that EFL teachers support incorporating culture teaching. Moreover, the statistical analysis of the results proved that incorporating intercultural knowledge in teaching positively impacts students reading attitude.

**Keywords:** EFL Teachers' Perceptions, Intercultural Awareness, Reading Attitude

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## **Introduction**

Universities and institutions resemble a cultural channel to different communication after graduation. Learners should be well-equipped for responding and dealing with different challenges, ideas and societies. Due to using technology in all fields, graduates nowadays can connect various countries. Consequently, university students need to be able to deal with a global society (Russo et al., 2014).

Language is considered as an instrument for transmitting people knowledge, ideas, manners and characteristics in a specific society. The maintenance of a society depends on the association between its culture that include behaviors and all ways of life and language which is the tool that transfers that culture from a generation to the next one (Bloomfield, 1994). Language is the mirror of its culture. Culture cannot be continued or transmitted without a language that transfers ethics, manners and philosophies which define that culture. Therefore, Jiang (2000) considers language as the seen image that reflects its culture. Culture awareness makes words meaningful. The unique structure of a culture is reflected through its language. Words gain certain meaning according to the specific features of its culture. Since these features are different from culture to another, words also have different meanings according to its culture background. For instance, according to the English culture, the word rainy in the proverb “*Save for a rainy day*” means difficult while the same word has a positive meaning according to Arabic culture since all Arabs wait for rain to water their lands (Nida, 2001). Subsequently, without culture awareness, there would be misunderstanding in communication between people who have different culture background. Therefore, teaching intercultural awareness should be of a high priority nowadays.

Communication with people from different countries and with different background is the main aim for learning a foreign language. Since contexts that used for communication are not culture-free, culture cannot be isolated when teaching a language. Subsequently, culture awareness should be an integral part of foreign language learning process (Kramsch, 1993). Besides developing communication skills that are the base of teaching a foreign language, developing personal and social skills are among the aims of FLT as well. The promotion of communication skills is not mere exchanging information through using the language, but also intercultural involvement and familiarity as it is like interaction with a different realism (Robotjazi, 2008 and Longo, 2008). Misinterpreting English language when interacting with native speakers takes place as a result of translating words as separate sentences away from its culture. For instance, the word dog according to the English culture is used to give positive meaning like the sentence "you are my lucky dog" that means "you are my faithful friend" while the same sentence would be comprehended shamefully according to Arabian culture since the word dog used to give undesirable meaning in all Arab countries (Omar & Altaieb, 2015). Subsequently, for successful communication with native speakers, culture awareness should be integral part of learning English language process. Knowing characteristics and features of culture impacts the understanding of the language that not only involves comprehending structure and vocabulary but its culture as well. Separating culture apart from the language results in misapprehending the real meaning of words (Brown, 2007). The differences between people national culture and foreign one are among the causes of culture discrimination. Interacting with people from different countries means dealing with different backgrounds. Accordingly, there is a need to understand, respect and accept other culture differences. Learning culture through language enable learners to accept and respect other views and thoughts. Incorporating culture into the design of course book enable learners to succeed in learning a foreign language. (Mahboudi & Javdani, 2012). According to Rajaeenia (2015), Culture includes language and its features that is why learning a foreign language should not take place separately from its culture.

Learners become able to reach and examine different cultural resources as a result of the spread of internet and cross-culture exchanges. For that reason, they should be well-equipped with cultural awareness that enable them to accept and respect other cultures beliefs and values. Moreover, cultural knowledge promotes successful communication. Consequently, the main aim of the current study is to explore EFL teachers' perceptions towards culture teaching and develop learners reading attitude that might in turn develop their multicultural awareness and knowledge. Such awareness enables learners to communicate effectively with native speakers.

### **The Context of the Problem**

Baumgardner (2006) emphasized that communication is the main purpose of learning a foreign language. If teaching English takes place in a separate way from language society and culture, learners will meet difficulties concerning comprehensible communication with native speakers. Therefore, culture awareness is a vital component for successful communication. Moreover, a number of studies (e.g., Genc and Bada, 2005; Agudelo, 2007; Longo, 2008; Razi, 2012) assured that incorporating culture in teaching language develops the language skills besides raising culture knowledge and accepting different values and beliefs. Additionally, a number of researchers (e.g., Al-Fahadi (2006, cited in Al-Fahadi, 2012); Gonen and Saglam, 2012; Shukri, 2014) investigated teachers' perception towards teaching culture. They confirmed that teachers recognize the implication of teaching culture inside classrooms. On the other hand, a number of scholars (e.g., Ayvazoğlu, 2002; Falay, 2002; Sinanoğlu, 2002; Şen, 2002 cited in ÖNALAN 2005) believe that teaching culture has a negative effect on one's own language and awareness. Consequently, there is a need to explore teachers' perception towards teaching culture. Furthermore, there is a need to examine the impact of culture teaching on students.

### **Statement of the Problem**

EFL university students lack the sufficient training required for increasing positive reading attitude. For that reason, the researcher suggests that incorporating culture in teaching language may improve EFL university students reading attitude.

### **Questions**

1. Do EFL teachers support teaching language culture inside schoolrooms?
2. What do EFL teachers think is the impact of culture teaching on students' language skills and attitude?
3. What are the characteristics of the program that helps increasing reading attitude?
4. What is the impact of incorporating culture in teaching language in improving reading attitude?

### **Significance**

The study attempts to realize the following:

1. Incorporating culture in teaching EFL for developing reading attitude.
2. Promoting university students culture awareness.
3. Raising the awareness of EFL curricula designers to the importance of incorporating culture in course books.

### **Hypotheses**

1. There is statistically significant difference between the mean score of the experimental group on the pre- and post- administration of reading attitude scale favoring the post administration scores.

### **Delimitations**

1. A sample of the faculty of pharmacy first year students from Horus University.
2. The summer semester of the academic year 2018/2019.

## **Review of Literature**

According to Longo (2008), since English has become an international language, EFL teachers should have culture background in order to help their learners to have culture awareness that enable them to communicate and interact effectively with other societies. Our culture, beliefs and vision are affected by communication, interaction and exposure to other countries through learning their language. Learning a foreign language skills involve speaking, writing, listening and reading contexts that contain different beliefs, views and a great part of culture knowledge that help learners accept and respect different views and beliefs (Couper, 2001; Yassine, 2006; Jular, 2007; Ara'ujo e S'a and S'ílvia Melo 2007; Longo, 2008). Ideas and thoughts that people understand from the foreign language they use to communicate with each other are associated components of that language culture. It is indication that language and culture are codependent (Brown, 2000 & Eldin, 2015). According to Gonen & Saglam (2012), language is a personification of culture. If people separate language from culture, language will become meaningless. Both language and culture are acquirable and learnable. However, learning a foreign language does not result in learning its culture and vice versa. In EFL classrooms, language is not taught through authentic situations. Consequently, integrating culture into foreign language schoolrooms is of great significance since language cannot be separated from culture (Lessard-Cloouston, 1997, cited in Thanasoulas, 2001 and Sercu & Bandura, 2005).

## **Intercultural Awareness**

According to Brown (2007), culture is a method by which people behave, think, decide and deal with each other. It is the frame that unifies a specific community. Therefore, culture directs people performances according to what is expected from them in terms of their culture. According to Pedersen (1999), culture is defined as means of life together with people relationships and values. Salzmann (1993) and Arredondo et al., (1996) viewed culture as people manners and knowledge that conveyed through their language. Metcalf (2005) regarded culture as all things that taught to children by their community. Whereas intercultural awareness defined as being familiar and having knowledge of different cultures in order to promote worldwide and multi-cultural acceptance. This trend in foreign language learning is advantageous. It gives learners background and knowledge about their own culture as well as the culture of the foreign language they study. This indicates that teaching a foreign language should take in both semantic and intercultural awareness. Such perspective in teaching a foreign language enables learners to communicate with people from other cultures and accept their differences (Byram et al., 2002). Intercultural cultural awareness operationally defined as learners' familiarity with various cultures that enable them to accept and communicate with foreign societies.

Being aware of the relation between one's own culture and other cultures is the first step for developing cultural awareness of learners. Therefore, concerning teaching cultural awareness, teachers ought to explore their learners' cultural background in order to define their needs (Kuuston, 2006, cited in Beaudrie, et al (2009)). According to Tolinson and Masuhara (2004), culture awareness enhances the ability to accept one's own culture and other cultures. Moreover, it develops the skills of realizing and respecting similarities and differences between cultures. In a cross-culture world, the purpose of teaching a foreign language is helping people with different cultural background to communicate effectively. For achieving this aim, new approaches and methods of teaching are needed to develop language skills as well as skills of acceptance, tolerance, democracy, mutual understanding and critical thinking. Accordingly, foreign language teachers need training in linguistic and educational material that involves cross-cultural contexts. Since knowledge and skills are transferred from teachers to their learners, teachers should be aware of intercultural knowledge (Humphrey, 2002).

### **Significance of Intercultural Knowledge Teaching**

Fluent fool is an expression used by Bennett (1993) that describes learners that can speak a foreign language without understanding incorporeal or societal meaning of context. Learning a foreign language cannot take place away from its culture. Culture awareness is essential for language speaker as it enables him/her to understand the social meaning of a language. Moreover, it teaches acceptance and tolerance towards different views. On the other hand, teaching language away from its culture result in teaching vocabulary and expressions that are misunderstood as they are separated from their culture. Therefore, EFL teachers should make a balance between teaching culture awareness and language (Phillipson, 1992). Unlike second language classrooms, learners in foreign language classroom expose to a completely different culture in comparison to their own. Foreign language materials require integrating topics that address international matters in order for learners to know how language is used. In this regard, Shukri (2014) confirmed that cultural activities develop learners' awareness.

The same group of students inside the classroom has different beliefs, manners and ideas. Therefore, their decisions and behaviors are not the same. Thus, the same classroom is multicultural Kumaravadivelu (2003). For that reason, Kramersch (1993) promotes both teachers and students to construct what is called third culture inside the classroom where the classroom becomes a place for multicultural knowledge. In such classrooms, teachers and students are required to appreciate the uniqueness of their own culture and the culture of the target language community as well which can takes place if they improved what Kumaravadivelu (2003) named critical cultural consciousness that enable people use critical thinking towards different ideas and respect these differences in terms of realizing that no specific culture exemplifies the whole world. In a study that investigated teaching culture, Shukri (2014) confirmed that teacher is the main element in teaching the target language and transferring its culture to the learners as well. Teaching cultural awareness plays a deep role in language learning. Kumaravadivelu (2003) named it the hidden curriculum that qualifies students to sympathy, understand and respect the culture of the foreign language taught. In that regard, language teachers should decide the suitable method that suits multicultural classroom. Deciding the teaching method facilitates comprehension and aids avoiding misunderstanding and the inappropriate use of language by learners Leveridge (2008).

### **EFL Language Cultural Versus Multicultural Awareness**

Cultural awareness involves teaching culture features of the target language included in the course book and avoiding the insignificant components. In contrast, multicultural awareness involves teaching numerous cultures besides the target one (Byram, Gribkova & Starkey, 2002; Sercu & Bandura, 2005; Al-Fahadi, 2012). Consequently, concerning teaching culture, teachers have to decide what type of culture awareness should be taught. Moreover, unlike the static perspective that ignores the connection between culture and language, the dynamic perspective of culture awareness understands that connection and supports culture teaching. It encourages learners to understand the association between language and its culture background in terms of recognizing their own and the target language culture Liddicoat (2002). On the other hand, among the various views of teaching culture is the essentialist view. According to Grillo (2003), this view includes introducing the necessary features of its population. This view suggests that these features are unchanging and related to particular language and nation. English language nowadays is spoken by several countries. Therefore, it cannot be linked to specific countries like USA or UK. Moreover, it cannot be accompanied to specific standards or beliefs of particular population. These reasons directed Al-Fahadi (2012) to assure that EFL teachers should develop multicultural awareness among students inside classroom.

### **The Impact of Intercultural Teaching on Language Learning**

Culture is milieu that helps people define why and what proper, possible and appreciated for them Graves (1996). According to Brown (2007), language is the method by which culture is expressed and kept. Hence, one's ideas, behaviors and style of life can be modified as a result of adopting or changing to another culture. Therefore, Tang (1999) advocates that speaking a foreign language requires thinking the same way as the culture of the target language which in turn requires understanding for different values. Gorjian and Farshad (2017) confirmed that teaching culture can be achieved through reading texts. They assured that reading comprehension enables learners to understand the ideas and meaning behind words. They suggested teaching culture through reading novels. A number of researchers (e.g., Alptekin, 2002; Skopinskaja, 2003; Calvo Cortes, 2007; Jular, 2007; Mai Hoa, 2007) have studied the impact of incorporating culture awareness in teaching a foreign language. They confirmed that communication using a foreign language involves interaction between people and their culture. Moreover, language, beliefs, ideas and view are components of culture which implies that communication inevitably takes place using language and its culture. They recommended integrating culture into teaching a foreign language since both language and culture cannot be separated or comprehended independently.

Kramersch & Sullivan (1996) investigated the problems of teaching cultural awareness inside English language schoolrooms. They found that the unchanging system of learning process, the unavailability of teachers who have cultural background, the lack of native English speakers inside foreign language classrooms and constrains of time allowed for teaching culture awareness are the main obstacles that hinder teaching cultural awareness. Calvo Cortes (2007) assured that understanding a foreign language requires cultural familiarity and knowledge. As separate words are meaningless unless they are used in a text, language also is not understood if it is separated from its culture. Understanding values, customs and all aspect of culture that define people who speak that language is necessary for successful communication.

To sum up, values, beliefs, tradition and all ways of life represent the culture. Language is the medium by which a specific community can pass on, spread and maintain its culture. Isolating language from its culture results in unsuccessful communication. Fruitful communication requires culture awareness.

### **Teachers Perception towards Intercultural Teaching**

Sercu and Bandura (2005) investigated opinions of teachers from different foreign countries towards teaching intercultural awareness. Teaching culture for teachers who participated in the study meant transferring knowledge concerning the use of language by native speakers in real life situation instead of teaching historical topics, standards and beliefs of that cultural. It was found that culture awareness has positive effect on learners' acceptance of different beliefs and performance as well. Gonen and Saglam (2012) explored teachers' perception towards teaching culture. The questionnaires and interviews that were used for collecting data revealed that teachers, who were not the same academic background, realize the significance of teaching culture. Moreover, the study recommended training EFL teachers on techniques of teaching culture in addition to integrating culture when designing course books for achieving that target. Following the same line, Al-Fahadi (2006, cited in Al-Fahadi, 2012), confirmed that EFL teachers in KSA and in particular the Islam-phobic teachers supported the idea of integrating the culture of the target language into the curriculum.

In contrast, a number of researchers (e.g., Ayvazoğlu, 2002; Falay, 2002; Sinanoğlu, 2002; Şen, 2002 cited in ÖNALAN 2005) are against teaching target culture for a number of reasons: first, they consider that foreign culture has undesirable effect on one's own language and awareness. Second, they assure the importance of using first language in learning process. Third, they

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consider that the idea of teaching English as a global language for achieving progress is a mistaken belief and they assure that the first language is the leading means for creativeness and development. Among the opponents of teaching culture is Sinanoğlu (2002) who declares that multicultural knowledge definitely damages one's own culture awareness and in turn harms the whole society.

### **Reading Attitude**

In EFL reading, learners are required to scan, skim and comprehend the meaning behind the texts. It was confirmed that the attitudes students form towards the culture of the target language impact their learning. A positive attitude towards the target language impact ones desire to learn and understand it. In order for learners to develop positive reading attitude, they should be motivated to reading (Brown, 2000 & Harmer, 2007). Reading attitude defined as students' emotional state towards reading that directs them to involve in or reject reading classroom (Partin & Gillespie, 2002 and Annamalai & Muniandy, 2013). Bas (2012) defined it as psychological state which is based on familiarity, background, knowledge, excitement and motivation to read about specific topics. Reading attitude operationally defined as learners' motivation towards reading that is based on intercultural awareness and measured by the score they get on the reading attitude scale.

Through reading, learners improve awareness and understanding about the global society. Reading skills involve understanding meaning, interpreting codes used in the text and using mental processes (Iskandarwassid & Sunendar, 2008). According to Spratt et al., (2011), reading requires comprehension as well as interpretation of texts. Reading skills include reading for: exact information, meaning, details, understanding, inferring and reading for predicting. Brown (2000) investigated the relation between attitude and language learning success. It was found that learners made use of positive attitude as it increase their motivation to develop academic performance. Yamashita (2004) explored the relation between reading attitude and proficiency. It was found that positive feeling motivate learners to read. It was assured that positive attitude towards reading impact students performance. Moreover, Sani and Zain (2011) found a positive relation between reading self-efficacy, attitude and ability. On the other hand, results of Annamalai and Muniandy (2013) study confirmed that learners dislike reading as it is a challenge and demanding activity for them. Kush et al., (2005 cited in Sundari (2013)) assured that positive reading attitude improved over successful reading experiences. Lukhele (2013) investigated the relation between reading attitude, reading ability and performance. It was found that learners had positive attitudes towards reading however; there was not a relation between their attitude and reading abilities. The study assured that positive attitudes towards reading do not develop reading ability.

### **The Relation between Incorporating Intercultural Awareness in Language Teaching and Learners' Attitude**

Cakir (2006) confirmed that incorporating culture awareness into course design positively impacts the development of language skills as well as learners' attitude and beliefs. According to Craves (1996), reacting and interaction in a proper method using language depends on understanding its culture. Accordingly, teachers who deal with culture as fundamental part of course book are able to teach their students how to respond in different situation and accept different views of life so they can communicate internationally. According to Ansary & Babaii (2003), teaching culture promotes students motivation and interest in English language. Furthermore, understanding foreign cultures increase learners' tolerance towards different beliefs and philosophies.

Intercultural learning assumed to promote international and cross culture acceptance, broad-mindedness and tolerance (Guilherm, 2002; Yassine, 2006; Jular, 2007; Agudelo, 2007; Longo, 2008). The aim of teaching a language is developing its skills for developing understanding and

interaction between people. Besides speaking, reading, listening and writing, culture is a main skill among language skills (Genc & Bada, 2005). Razi (2012) found that teaching culture inside classrooms resulted in developing language skills, raised culture awareness, raised acceptance for different views and ideas and changed thinking and attitudes towards native speakers and their cultures. Raising the language acquisition in addition to the academic performance is definitely achieved through including activities that support cultural awareness (Tomlinson and Masuhara, 2004). According to Tomlinson (2001) enhancing cultural awareness includes realizing equivalence of all cultures, respecting other cultures and appreciating similarities and differences between one's own culture and other cultures. Cultural awareness results in increasing broadmindedness and acceptance in addition to developing comprehensible global communication. Cultural knowledge adds to reliability of people and awareness adds to understanding and tolerance. Both of them increase motivation towards language learning (Tomlinson, 2000b).

To conclude, the related literature assures that the language is the mirror of its culture. Moreover, effective communication with native speakers demands understanding to their culture for avoiding misunderstanding. In such climate in addition to the age of globalization that we live in, the acquisition of foreign language indispensably requires the acquisition of its culture. Bearing in mind the absence of Egyptian studies that investigate teachers' perceptions of teaching culture in EFL classrooms and considering the positive impact of incorporating intercultural teaching as assured by literature, the objectives of the current study are to investigate EFL teachers perceptions towards culture teaching and examine the impact of intercultural teaching on learners reading attitude since their attitudes positively impact their academic performance.

## **Methodology**

### **Participants**

A sample of students from faculty of pharmacy at Horus University was selected and assigned to an experimental group (N =31). Their age ranged from eighteen to nineteen years. The instructress of the experimental group was the researcher herself. The researcher has chosen this university because she is a lecturer at the department of English there.

### **Design**

Applying the quasi-experimental design, the experimental group received pre application of reading attitude scale. After the training that was based on incorporating culture in English language teaching, the experimental group received the post application of reading attitude scale.

### **Instruments**

Concerning investigating EFL teachers' perceptions towards culture teaching and its impact on students' language skills and attitudes, the researcher designed a three-point Likert Scale (agree, neutral, disagree) questionnaire that was distributed to 21 EFL teachers from primary, preparatory and secondary school stages. As for examining students' reading attitude, the researcher designed a reading attitude scale. Validity of the scale was established through jury validation. Alpha Cronbach was used to measure the amount of internal consistency for the scale. The value of alpha coefficient for the scale was 0.705, which means that the scale is reliable.



## **The Treatment: Incorporating Culture Knowledge in Teaching English Language for Developing EFL learners Reading Attitude**

### **Objectives**

Based on the literature and related studies review, a training program was constructed. The program aims at:

- 1- Enhancing university students' reading attitude.
- 2- Enhancing university students' tolerance towards foreign culture.
- 3- Enhancing university students' intercultural awareness.

### **Description, Duration and Content**

The program consisted of seven sessions. Each session was 120 minutes alongside the summer semester. The application of the program lasted for 7 weeks (July and August) during the academic year 2018/2019 from 7/7/2019 till 31/8/2019.

### **Results and Discussion**

For answering the first and second questions, a three-point Likert Scale (agree, neutral, disagree) questionnaire was used to investigate teachers' perceptions towards incorporating intercultural awareness in EFL teaching and its impact on students language skills and attitude as revealed in table 1. For answering the first question: Do EFL teachers support teaching language culture inside schoolrooms? Items 1,2,3,4 and 5 of the questionnaire were used. For answering the second question: What do EFL teachers think is the impact of culture teaching on students' language skills and attitude? Items 6,7,8,9 and 10 of the questionnaire were used.

*Table 1: teachers' perceptions towards incorporating intercultural awareness in EFL teaching.*

<b>Items of questionnaire</b>		<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1. Teaching intercultural awareness is significant as teaching the language inside the classrooms	Agree	16	76 %
	Neutral	3	14 %
	Disagree	2	9 %
2. It is possible to incorporate cultural knowledge in EFL teaching.	Agree	15	71 %
	Neutral	4	19 %
	Disagree	2	9 %
3. Cultural awareness should be taught for advanced levels.	Agree	7	33 %
	Neutral	2	9 %
	Disagree	12	57 %
4. Cultures of all English-speaking countries are functional to be incorporated in the curriculum.	Agree	11	52 %
	Neutral	5	23 %
	Disagree	5	23 %
5. Culture activities should be extended in EFL course book.	Agree	19	90 %
	Neutral	2	9 %
	Disagree	0	0 %
6. Cultural awareness results in losing one's identity.	Agree	2	9 %
	Neutral	7	33 %
	Disagree	12	57 %
7. Culture knowledge teaching enhances learners' acceptance to different views.	Agree	14	66 %
	Neutral	4	19 %
	Disagree	3	14 %
8. Teaching culture motivates learners reading attitudes.	Agree	18	85 %
	Neutral	3	14 %
	Disagree	0	0 %
9. Teaching culture enhances language skills of learners.	Agree	17	80 %
	Neutral	2	9 %
	Disagree	2	9 %
10. In conversation with native speakers, misunderstanding takes place as a result of culture differences.	Agree	16	76 %
	Neutral	3	14 %
	Disagree	2	9 %

Table 1 shows that a great percentage of EFL teachers who teach in different stages and with different academic background approve that teaching intercultural knowledge is significant. 90 percent of them believe that culture activities should be extended in course books. This result goes in line with Sercu & Bandura (2005) and Gonen & Saglam (2012) who assured the significance of teaching cultural knowledge and recommended integrating cultural activities in the curriculum. 66 percent of EFL teachers agree that teaching culture make learners tolerant and can accept different ideas and views in addition to 80 percent of them think that it impact language skills where as 85 percent of them believe that it motivates reading attitude. This result goes in line with Tomlinson, (2000b) and Gonen and Saglam (2012) who assumed that teaching culture motivates learners towards learning. Furthermore, this result is compatible with Razi (2012) who assured that teaching culture develops language skills. Moreover, a number of researchers (e.g., Guilherm, 2002; Yassine, 2006; Jular, 2007; Agudelo, 2007; Longo, 2008) assured that teaching culture inside classrooms adds to learners tolerance, acceptance and broadminded.

76 percent of EFL teachers assured that communication failure is a result of culture differences. For that reason, 52 percent of them decided that cultures of all English-speaking countries are functional and should be integrated in the course books. Regarding investigating teachers if culture knowledge results in losing identity, 57 percent of teachers disagree. This result is entirely different from results of a number of studies (e.g., Ayvazoğlu, 2002; Falay, 2002; Sinanoğlu, 2002; Şen, 2002 cited in ÖNALAN 2005) who were against teaching culture. They claimed that teaching culture in EFL classrooms has a bad effect on learners own culture and language as well. The differences concerning teachers' perceptions and opinions about teaching culture between the current study and those studies that assured the harmful impact of teaching culture on EFL learners directed the researcher of the current study towards the pursuit of the main aim of the study which is investigating the impact of intercultural teaching on learners reading attitude.

For examining the main hypothesis of the study, t-test was used to compare the differences between the mean scores of learners in the reading attitude pre and post-scale in the experimental group as introduced in table 2.

*Table 2: Comparing the reading attitude of experimental group on the pre and post-scale.*

	Scale	Mean	SD	t value	Sig.
<b>Reading Attitude</b>	Pre-scale	17.543	1.78536	7.418	0.001
	Post-scale	23.637	2.17619		

Results in table 2 reveal that experimental group attained higher score in the post scale. A number of researchers (e.g., Tomlinson, 2000b; Tomlinson, 2001; Tomlinson & Masuhara; 2004 Genc & Bada, 2005; Razi, 2012) found that teaching intercultural awareness positively impact foreign language acquisition, attitudes and language skills. They add that cultural awareness results in understanding and accepting of different views which in turn leads to successful communication with native speakers. The sample of the current study was students who studied intensive English course during summer semester from faculty of pharmacy at Horus University. The main target of most learners of the current study was to get M.A scholarships after graduation in foreign countries. For that reason, they were very keen and motivated to read about EFL culture. Teaching English language culture motivated learners towards reading. This result is compatible with Gorjian and Farshad (2017) who assured that teaching intercultural knowledge is accomplished through reading texts. Learners of the current study were keen to understand the meaning behind words and how language used by native speakers. Moreover, they were very motivated to know the expressions and idioms and how

they can use them in real situations. A number of studies (e.g., Alptekin, 2002; Skopinskaja, 2003; Calvo Cortes, 2007; Jular, 2007; Mai Hoa, 2007) have studied the effect of integrating culture in teaching a foreign language. They assured that successful communication with native speakers implicates comprehending their beliefs, manners, thoughts and traditions which are components of culture. Learners of current study show positive attitudes towards reading as they realized that successful communication requires comprehending language as well as its culture. This result goes in line with Brown (2000) and Harmer (2007) who confirmed that motivation develops a positive reading attitude.

### **Discussion**

The results of the questionnaire that investigated how EFL teachers perceive incorporating intercultural teaching inside classrooms revealed that they are with integrating culture teaching. Furthermore, their responses to the items of the questionnaire exposed that they realize the significance of that incorporation and its positive impact on students' language skills and attitudes. As related to the second objective of the study, the statistical analysis of the results pointed to a significant positive correlation between incorporating culture teaching and students reading attitude. This result agrees with Calvo Cortes (2007) and Gorjian & Farshad (2017) who confirmed that cultural awareness adds to EFL students' comprehension and understanding. They assured that this target is achieved through reading. The sample of the current study was taught EFL culture through reading texts that involved multi-culture knowledge. Since the students of the current study were motivated to communicate with native speakers, so they showed positive attitude towards reading. Moreover, the training program designed for them involved knowledge about EFL culture which they were interested to read about. This result is compatible with Kush et al., 2005 (cited in Sundari (2013)) who confirmed that reading attitude developed through prosperous reading practices. The current study proved that incorporating EFL intercultural knowledge in teaching develops students reading attitude. There were a number of reasons that lead to this result: 1) The researcher explained the benefits of teaching EFL culture to the sample of the study at the first session of the training program designed for them, 2) The students of the current study were motivated to understand how to build a successful communication with native speakers based on EFL culture familiarity, 3) They were keen to know how to use certain expressions and idioms as used by native speakers and 4) They were motivated to read about EFL manners, beliefs, thoughts, customs and views to avoid communication misunderstanding that could happen because of their lack of cultural awareness. All the above mentioned reasons besides students' sincere desire to obtain foreign scholarships positively impact their reading attitude.

### **Conclusions**

Due to the absence of Egyptian publication concerning EFL teachers' perceptions towards intercultural teaching inside classrooms besides the absence of studies that investigate the impact of culture teaching on students, the researcher investigated teachers' opinions towards incorporating intercultural knowledge in teaching inside classrooms. The results of questionnaire that was distributed to 21 EFL teachers from different stages and with different academic background assured the significance of teaching culture as well as language. Furthermore, they confirmed the positive impact of teaching culture on students understanding and communication. However, this result was totally different from a great number of studies (e.g., Ayvazoğlu, 2002; Falay, 2002; Sinanoğlu, 2002; Şen, 2002 cited in ÖNALAN 2005) that confirmed a negative impact of teaching culture on students own culture, language skills and attitudes. This contradiction created a question about the impact of teaching culture on Egyptian students. This question stimulated the researcher of the current study to examine the impact of incorporating intercultural knowledge teaching on students reading attitudes. The results of the reading scale proved that incorporating intercultural knowledge in teaching has a positive impact on students reading attitude. Subsequently, with regard to the results of the current study, curriculum designers should consider incorporating intercultural knowledge in EFL courses. Moreover, EFL teachers should be aware of multi-culture since there are many English-speaking countries. Taken

into account the significance of integrating teaching EFL culture inside classrooms that is confirmed by related literature, future research is needed to explore the effect of EFL culture teaching on students' language skills. Additionally, the suitability of applying EFL culture teaching with younger pupils needs to be examined.

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