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**Assessment of Students' Cultural Awareness in
British Literature through Women Writers : the
Case of 1st Year Master Students.**

**Dissertation submitted to the Department of English in Candidacy
For the Degree of "Magister" in Assessment and Testing
In English Language Education**

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Declaration of Originality

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work and that any additional sources of information are duly cited. It contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which has been accepted for the qualification of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution.

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Dedications

*I dedicate this work to the memory of my father and
to my dear mother.*

To my beloved husband Samir and my lovely children:

Djazia, Nazim and Rachid.

To all my family and friends.

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Abstract

The present research work is an attempt to study the assessment of literature with reference to the cultural background. The study is conducted at the University of Abou Bekr Belkaid, Tlemcen, involving first year Masters students specialized in 'Literature & Civilization', and also teachers of literature. It is recognized that there is a lack of importance in the assessment of the cultural side of the literary work presented in the classroom. The teachers of literature emphasise more on the language and the content of the text rather than on the cultural components of it, either during the lecture or in the exams. Accordingly, the present research aims at providing some assessment techniques that give more importance to the students' cultural awareness. Yet, it has been divided into four chapters incorporating both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The research instruments used in collecting data are the students' questionnaire, the teachers' interview, classroom observation and test analysis. Using these methods, the researcher tries to identify if students are really assessed culturally or not. In fact, the findings of this research denote that the assessment of the students' cultural awareness is neglected by the majority of the teachers and sometimes absent and this is due to: lack of time, absence of teachers' training in this field and lack of pedagogical tools for students to enhance their cultural awareness. Finally, some recommendations and suggestions are provided in order to achieve some solutions with the aim of reinforcing the process of assessment of the cultural context in literary studies. As a result, some activities are proposed to make assessment easier for both teachers and students. On the other hand, the focus on the provision of the Islamic thoughts and knowledge in assessment is of a great importance to prepare the students for the real life and promote their leaning.

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List of Acronyms

EFL: English as foreign language.

LMD: Licence -Master- Doctorate.

ELT: English language teaching.

L1: First language.

L2: Second language

General Introduction

General Introduction

The teaching of literature has gained an important place in the Algerian Higher Education mainly in foreign language classrooms. Yet, literature is generally linked to the teaching of culture since it reflects the cultural values of the writer and his/her society. In fact, there is a general agreement that literature is considered as a source of cultural enrichment for learners, and the assessment of the cultural aspects in literature has been the major goal of the present research.

As far as the teaching of literature is concerned, the assessment of students' cultural awareness through literature is of great importance. Besides, to be aware of other cultures is to know about other thoughts, traditions and religions. Then, the assessment in literature has a positive influence on the students' motivation and behaviours towards learning foreign languages and knowing about different cultures. As a result, assessment enhances the students' thinking and enables them to use their knowledge and apply it to the real life situation. For this reason, the main objective of this research concentrates on the relationship that exists between literature, culture and assessment.

Hence, the real problem of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes in Algeria is lack of assessment of the cultural components of the literary text. This may lead to the development of a negative attitude towards foreign cultural values, and then, students are not given the opportunity to comment, criticize or evaluate these values referring to their culture. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to raise students' consciousness about different cultures in order to be familiar with and to upgrade their level of understanding and knowledge, by using different pedagogical tools.

Accordingly, much of the motivational pieces of advice are offered to teachers by some scholars and researchers to facilitate the process of assessment. The most important advice is to make texts motivating and to relate classroom topics and activities to the students' everyday experiences, backgrounds and preferences. So,

such tasks and activities can contribute to the assessment and raising of students' cultural awareness.

Thus, the specific objective of the present research work is to investigate the way EFL students are assessed in literature mainly in the cultural side, and try to find some adequate methods and pedagogical tools for the assessment. Also, first year master's students are have been selected for a case study. From this general aim, the following research questions are put forward:

- 1- Do students assimilate the different cultural aspects in the Victorian literary texts?
- 2- What are the characteristics of current assessment relating to the cultural aspects in literature lectures?
- 3- How can both culture learning objectives and their assessment be improved?

The answers to these questions may provide the following research hypotheses:

- 1- Yes, the students can assimilate the different cultural aspects in the Victorian literary texts through the teaching of literature which plays a central role in raising the students' cultural awareness. It acts as telling them what is important in life and how life might be lived this way rather than that way.
- 2- Cultural awareness can be assessed via Literature since the latter has not only disciplinary purposes but more broadly educational ones to prepare students for their civic responsibility and moral and ethical thoughtfulness as well.
- 3- The assessment of students' cultural awareness is based on teaching/learning methods that will encourage the students to think independently

and critically. In addition, assessment will serve both curriculum aims and educational end goals.

The research questions and the hypotheses will be discussed throughout four chapters. Chapter one attempts to provide a theoretical background of the research. It deals with the definition of the most important key words which are assessment, literature and culture and the different purposes behind using them in EFL classes. This chapter, also, sheds light on the major difficulties that both teachers and learners encounter in teaching and assessing literature and culture for language classrooms.

The second chapter describes the methodology used in the study for data collection, encompassing a general description of the teaching/learning situation as well as the module of women writers that aims at introducing a lot of cultural concepts of the Victorian age. Additionally, this chapter focuses on the collection of quantitative and qualitative data and a description of the sample population of the study. To do this effectively, four research instruments have been used for measurement, i.e. classroom observation, students' questionnaire, teachers' interview and test analysis.

The third chapter is concerned with the practical side of the research and it consists of data collection and analysis. All the data gathered from the above mentioned research instruments are analysed and interpreted in this chapter in order to confirm or disconfirm the research hypotheses.

The last chapter presents some useful suggestions and recommendations for the sake of improving the assessment of students' cultural awareness with regard to the teaching/learning methods of literature in general and culture in particular. These suggestions and recommendations include: the selection of the literary text according to the students' cultural background and by making it relevant to their experiences, the use of role play activities, to facilitate the process of assessment through introducing literature circles, to relate texts and therefore assessment to the Islamic worldview, encouraging teachers' training in the domain of assessment and

evaluation. Some other pedagogical activities are suggested after dealing with the reading comprehension of the literary text, and these activities are samples used to facilitate the assessment for both teachers and learners and also to promote the students' cultural awareness.

Finally, this research work is an attempt to foster the students' comprehension of the cultural components of the literary text, as well as, to facilitate the assessment of literature for teachers. Also, it is an attempt to encourage students to think independently and to enhance their knowledge, then, to make them aware of the useful and harmful elements of the selected texts.

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Chapter One

Review of Literature

1.1 Introduction

The first chapter of this research provides a review of literature related to the research objectives. It investigates the role of literature in developing the students' cultural awareness focusing on assessment in the area of intercultural understanding. This includes an overview about language assessment and language teaching as well. Yet, this chapter deals with the definitions of the key words – assessment, literature and culture- in order to introduce the relationships which exist between them. Besides, the focus is on the cultural content through the literary texts which are of a great importance for a better integration in the society, and to determine whether students can think and act into two or more different cultural ways.

1.2 Assessment and Language Teaching

In language teaching, the measurement of students' language abilities is achieved by teachers through tests, quizzes or more informal methods. It is used as a means to discover what the learners know and can do at a certain stage of the learning process. Furthermore, assessment as a new field in applied linguistics is concerned with those who have a strong interest in and influence on the teaching/learning process such as test designers, publishers, teachers and researchers.

1.2.1 What is Assessment?

Within the teaching/learning context, 'assessment' is the act of gathering information about the learners' knowledge and the ability to use it by making judgments. Also, it is the ongoing process of analyzing and reflecting on evidence to improve future students learning. As, Huba and Freed (2000, p.8) state *“assessment is the process of gathering and discussing information [...] in order*

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to develop a deep understanding of what students know, understand, and can do with their knowledge as a result of their educational experiences”.

Furthermore, there are four fundamental components of assessment, which are classified from describing the intended learning outcomes to discussing the results of teaching/learning improvement. The following figure summarizes these elements of learner-centered assessment:

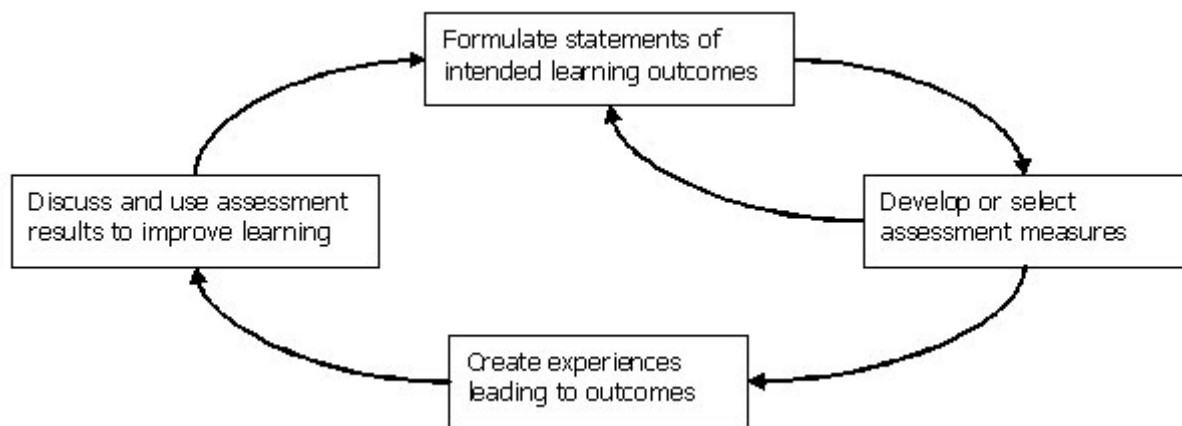


Figure 1.1 Fundamental Components of Assessment (Huba and Freed 2000, p.10)

The fundamental components of assessment start with a presentation of the teachers' intentions about what students should know, understand and be able to do with their understanding and knowledge. So, it is important to describe clear and measurable learning outcomes. Next, there will be a selection of diverse sources and measures used to assess whether the intended learning outcomes have been achieved or not. Also, the collected data should be used to make inferences and evaluation of the educational program and to develop a deep understanding as a result of some educational experiences. That is, to develop a high level of reasoning and understanding to students as to put relevance in each activities. Then, students should realize how to make use of their knowledge and apply it to the real life situations. Finally, a discussion will be held using the results to improve students' individual performances, i.e. to use the data gathered from assessment to determine whether students have achieved learning outcomes or not.

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1.2.2 Assessment Purposes

In recent years, assessment has begun to be used by government and policy makers for a wide range of purposes since assessment practices vary according to the purpose for which the assessment information is required. The three purposes for assessment are described as follow:

- Assessment for learning
- Assessment as learning
- Assessment of learning

First, the ‘assessment for learning’ is the process used by teachers to inform curriculum planning and teaching practice through the inferences about students’ progress. It integrates assessment in the learning and teaching process using a range of assessment tools and teaching approaches. Sometimes referred to as *Formative Assessment*. Besides, assessment for learning provides students with information and guidance about their current achievement and the expected goal. Also, it provides them with constructive feedback. So, it is a powerful process that can either optimise or inhibit learning, depending on how it is applied. In other terms, Assessment for learning encourages students to be involved in their learning and it depends too on teachers’ diagnostic skills to make it work (Earl, 2003).

Then, ‘assessment as learning’ establishes students’ role and responsibilities by giving them the opportunity to use assessment to further their own learning. Self and peer assessments allow the students to reflect on and monitor their progress by making adaptations and adjustments to what they understand. Earl, also, expresses the view that:

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Effective assessment empowers students to ask reflective questions and consider a range of strategies for learning and acting. Over time, students move forward in their learning when they can use personal knowledge to construct meaning, have skills of self-monitoring to realize that they don't understand something, and have ways of deciding what to do next.

Earl (2003, p.25)

Accordingly, assessment as learning offers students the chance to set their personal goals as they are experienced by them and to plan for their own future learning in order to increase their rate of progress and extend their thirst for learning. Thus, teachers would be able to improve the teaching process by identifying learners' strengths and weaknesses that are as elements of feedback.

The final purpose which is 'assessment of learning' helps teachers to get an evident student learning outcomes as well as to assess their achievements. It is also referred to as '*Summative Assessment*' since its purpose is summative and gives an **“overview of previous learning” (Black 1998, p.28)**. In fact, this is the assessment that is used to provide a detailed report to the parents and stakeholders on the level of achievement of the learning process. It takes place at the end of a learning experience, when it is difficult to alter or rectify what has already occurred. In addition, assessment of learning can be used to plan for future learning goals.

Therefore, assessment would have both formative and summative objectives through the use of procedures and instruments done for learners and not just to learners. So, the emphasis would be put on the academic success and concentration on the students' development of his or her potential rather than on training them for a particular exam (Benmoussat , 2003). A summary of approaches to assessment is represented in the following figure:

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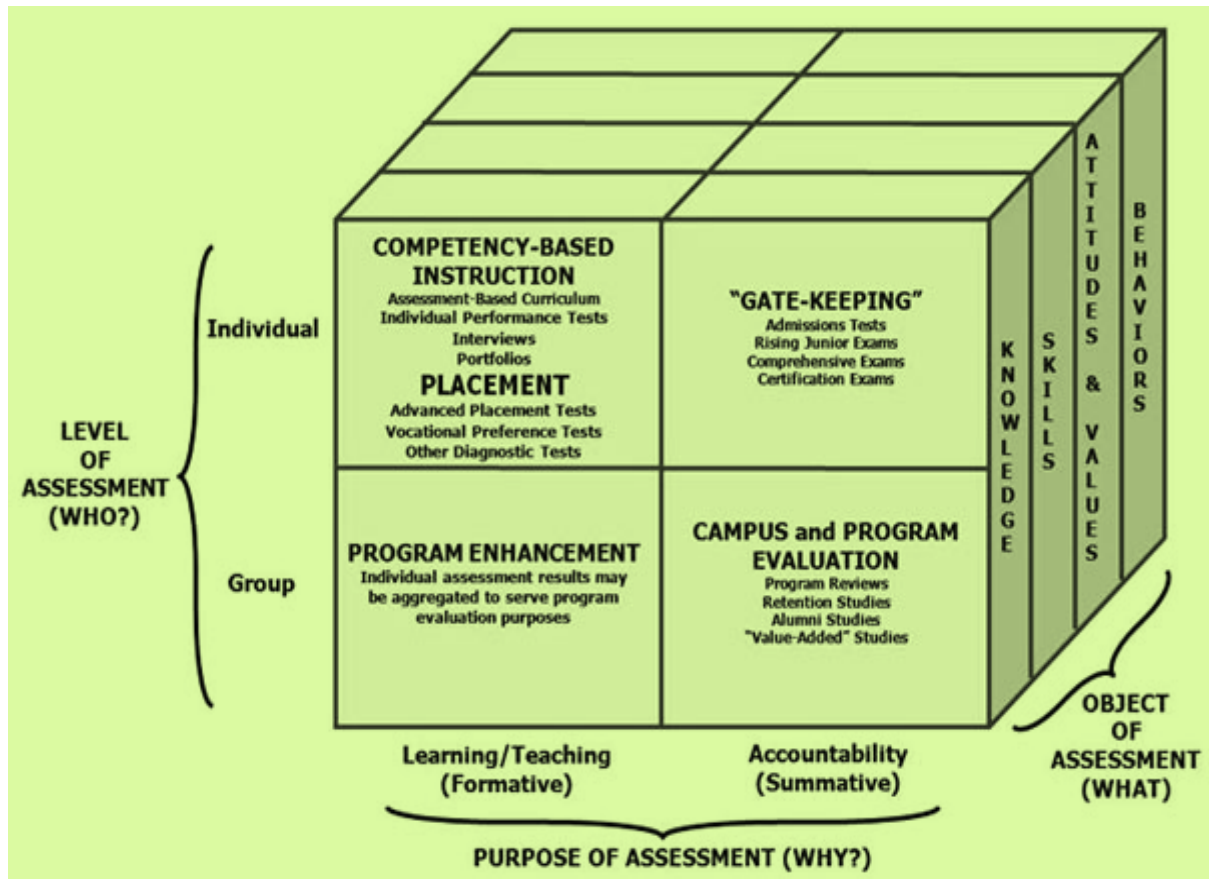


Figure 1.2 Taxonomy of Approaches to Assessment (Terenzi, Patrick T. 1989, p.648)

In simple terms, assessment is a set of processes which go on the whole time, but which can be formalized, systematized, harmonized and reported on in a variety of ways as required. It can include not only the assessment of learners by teachers, but also self-assessment, peer assessment and portfolio assessment can help students become more effective self-directed learners.

1.3 Literature and English Language Teaching

Once colonization came to an end, Literature of different countries gained prominence and captured the imagination of the readers. Earlier, people were really skeptical to think beyond Shakespeare and Milton, hence, the twenty-first century reflects the changing mindset of people all over the world.

1.3.1 The Concept of Literature

The term 'literature' is variously viewed by different scholars and there is no single definition which is conventionally decided. It has been basically used in two

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different senses. First, to refer to a written material on a subject. Second, literature is a term used to refer to one of the studied school disciplines. According to Onuekwusi:

Literature is any imaginative and beautiful creation in words whether oral or written, which explores man as he struggles to survive in his existential position and which provides entertainment, information, education and excitement to its audience.

Onuekwusi (2013, p.5)

This definition attempts to capture the main aims of literature via the expression of people's voice by giving the emotional as well as the intellectual pleasure. Moreover, literature as a school discipline is the way to derive some benefits for the students and give them knowledge and understanding as Diyanni points out that literature *“though transports us to the world, created by imagination, yet evokes our emotions of love, sorrow, joy, and pity, and thus enhances our appreciation and understanding of life”* (2002, p.2).

Additionally, the concepts of literature are seldom satisfactory and change over time as well. What may be considered ordinary in one time period may be considered literary genius in another. This can be noticed, for example, through the initial reviews of Emily Brontë's Wuthering Heights in 1847 that were less than spectacular and now are considered ones of the greatest literary achievements of all time. The same thing can be said for another literary work too which is Herman Melville's Moby-Dick (1851). These definitions of literature change because they do not create the reality but they describe and clarify it. So, literature is something that reflects human condition and makes them think about ourselves and our society. Literature is the mirror of society and the creation of another world that we can see only through reading.

On the other hand, there are eleven literary compositions that have influenced the world and are cited as follow (adapted from Easy literature with Taj, 2014):

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- a. *The Bible or Christian Sacred Writings*: it is originated from Palestine and Greece and is considered as the basis of Christianity,
- b. *The Iliad and the Odyssey*: these have been the source of myths and legends of Greece written by Homer.
- c. *The Mahab-harata*: the longest epic in the world. It contains the history of religion in India.
- d. *The Canterbury Tales*: it reflects the English religion and customs in the early days.
- e. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*: it depicted the sad fate of slaves and later on became the basis of democracy.
- f. *The Divine Comedy*: this revealed the religion and customs of the early Italians.
- g. *El Cid Campeador*: it shows the cultural characteristics of the Spaniards and their national history.
- h. *The Songs of Roland*: it tells the Golden Age of Christianity in France.
- i. *The Book of the Dead*: it includes the culture of Oris and the mythology and theology of Egypt.
- j. *The Book of the Days*: this was written by Confucius of China that consequently became the basis of Christian religion in China.
- k. *One Thousand and One Nights or Arabian Nights*: it shows the ways of government of the industries and of the society of the Arabs and Persians.

1.3.2 Functions of Literature in EFL Teaching

The use of literature in EFL classroom has become less popular especially when the focus in language teaching approaches was based on the functional use of language. That is why, the role of literature has been reconsidered and now, the latter contributes to develop the learners' linguistic performance, fluency and the ability to understand what is read, i.e. it is a potential source of learners' motivation. Collie and Slater (1987, p.3-6) "*support the inclusion of literature in the language classroom as it provides valuable authentic material, develops personal involvement and help contribute to readers' cultural as well as language*

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enrichment.” Still on the utilities of Literature, Unoh (1981) quoted in in Richard C. Ihejirika (2014) posits that:

A good literature can be an important aid to cultural assimilation or acculturation ; language development and competence ; conflict resolution ; emotional development and stability ; development of positive and good-oriented attitudes to life [...], and as a consequences of all these, a stable and mature personality.

Ihejirika (2014, p.86)

So, literature is used in ELT in order to improve the learners’ communicative competence, and enables them to grow personally and socially by raising their cultural awareness as well. In short, literature serves a dual purpose, it informs and delights at the same time. Scholars in this field have proposed various advantages for the use of literature in EFL classes. What follows is a summary of what can be considered as the merits of literature in EFL.

1.3.2.1 Authenticity

The linguistic criterion defends the importance of literature as a source of genuine authentic texts that provides the learner with real examples of a wide range of styles, text types and registers. According to Shrestha (2008) *“literature is inherently authentic and provides authentic input for language learning”*. Besides, Maley (1989) states that *“literature deals with non-trivial things which are personally relevant to them”*. Literary texts commonly deal with events, ideas and feelings that may conform to a real or imaginative part of the readers’ experience, i.e. to relate the reading experience with their previous background knowledge that facilitates the learning process.

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1.3.2.2 Motivation

Motivation is achieved when students are exposed to what they really enjoy mainly via global topics shared by all cultures. This motivation is one of the elements which can drive the learners to go ahead and it creates a positive effect on the learning process which is at the same time positive for the particular process of language acquisition. In this respect, literary texts are very motivating due to their authenticity and meaningful context they provide (Van, 2009, Ghosn, 2002). Moreover, literary texts help *“to stimulate the imagination of students, to develop their critical abilities, and to increase their emotional awareness”* (Lazar,1993, p.19). In sum, *“literature allows students to reflect on their lives, learning and language”* (Langer,1997, p.607).

1.3.2.3 Cultural Awareness and Globalization

The third cultural criterion is of a major importance in defending the implementation of literary texts in EFL, especially in the era of globalization where there is a growing concern of universally shared needs and wants rather than individual needs. Furthermore, literature is one of the best ways to understand the culture and the traditions of the target language. As Carter (1991,p.2) claims literature enables students *“to understand and appreciate cultures and ideologies different from their own in time and space and to come to perceive traditions of thought, feeling and artistic form in those cultures”*. By this way, students learn to see the world from different points of views and discover different ways of living in different societies.

1.3.3 Approaches to Teaching Literature

Having decided the integration of literary texts in EFL classroom, some scholars have proposed a number of teaching approaches that are beneficial to the learners. Carter and Long (1991) have proposed three approaches to the teaching of literature that will be presented: the Language Approach, the Cultural Approach and the Personal Growth Approach. Recently, another approach has been advocated by Savvidou (2004) which is the Integrated Approach.

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1.3.3.1 The Cultural Approach

The cultural approach is a means of transmitting important ideas to students and gives them the opportunity to discover and understand different cultures and ideologies. It is treated as a source of information about a target culture and a perfect way to preserve culture richness. As Fenner posits “*society is dynamic with constant changes [...] the literary text carries the culture of a specific language community and can give the reader valuable insight to the foreign culture*” (2001, p.16). For the same context Carter and Long claim that:

Teaching literature within a cultural model enables the students to understand and appreciate cultures and ideologies different from their own and space and to come to perceive traditions of thoughts, feeling and artistic form of within heritage literature of such cultures endows.

Carter and Long (1991, p.2)

In other words, the cultural approach requires students to examine historical, cultural, social and political background of the text. However, it seeks to raise the students’ cultural awareness. Besides, it represents the traditional approach to teaching literature and it tends to be quite teacher-centered.

1.3.3.2 The Language Approach

The language approach is the most common approach to literature. It is referred to as the language-based approach by Carter and Long (1991), where literary texts are seen as a means to helping students improve language proficiency. Similarly, Maley and Duff (1990) insist that the primary aim of this approach is “*quite simply to use literary texts as a resource for stimulating language activities*”.

In addition, this model emphasizes on the fact that literature could be seen as an instrument used to teach specific vocabulary and structures. That is, there is a little engagement of the learners with the text other than for purely linguistic practice, therefore, enhancing their language input. It is a learner-centered approach that

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basically stresses on the study of the language of the literary text. It aims *“to help students find ways into the text in a methodological way”*(Carter and Long, 1991, p.2). It aspires to promote the students’ literary competence.

1.3.3.3 The Personal Growth Approach

The object of the third approach, that of personal growth, is to bridge the two first models by emphasizing on the particular use of language in a text and placing it in a specific cultural context as well. Yet, the principle focus of this approach is on the personal experience of the learner. As Savvidou (2004) states: *“learners are encouraged to express their opinions and feelings, and make connections between their own personal and cultural experiences and those expressed in the text”*. Thus, learners could develop knowledge of ideas and language through different themes and topics.

Additionally, this function relates the reader with the text and makes them actively involved with its content. As Cadorath and Harris (1998, p.188) point out *“text itself has no meaning, it only provides direction for the reader to construct meaning from the reader’s own experience”*. Therefore, this active interaction yields in creating a rewarding literary experience through the students’ personal pleasure in reading literature. In order to support this idea, Carter and Long (1991) state that the personal growth model enables the students to *“achieve an engagement with the reading of literary text [...] and helping them to grow as individuals”* (1991, p.3). In spite of the engagement of students in reading literary texts, the teacher has to emphasize on an important pedagogical responsibility which is the selection of the texts that would be appropriate in order to meet students’ interest.

These three approaches to teaching literature differ in terms of their focus on the text and the weaknesses of one of them might constitute the strengths of the latest. What is needed is an approach that integrates all the aforementioned elements that makes literature accessible to learners and beneficial for their linguistic development.

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1.3.3.4 The Integrated Approach

The present approach offers learners strategies to analyse and interpret language in context by using a wide range of authentic texts and reading strategies. Also, it offers EFL learners the opportunity to develop not only their linguistic and communicative skills but their knowledge about language as well. Accordingly, for such an approach Duff and Maley (2007) posit their arguments to teaching literature that are for linguistic reasons, methodological reasons and also for motivational reasons. This approach mainly contributes to students' personal development; it enhances their cultural awareness and develop their language skills.

As a result, the main objective to teaching literature is not only the ability to collect information about the author, history and literary principles, but also the ability to think creatively, give personal opinions and apply the classroom study to practical life by recognizing their cultural identity in relation to other cultures. That is to say, *“to develop the ability to see with different eyes”* (Oster, 1989). In fact the integrated approach is an activity based approach. Students learn more when opportunities for learning increase and also when they are actively engaged in activities or when they are relatively successful in solving the problems.

1.3.4 The Difficulties in Using Literature in EFL Classrooms

Taking into account the advantages of the use of literature in the language classroom, there are some major difficulties that have been posited by some scholars such as language, cultural issues or text selection. In fact, through the analysis of most popular literary texts, *“we may find ourselves in the quite uncomfortable position of having to acknowledge that some of our favourite works might cause considerable inconvenience to our language students”*. Lima (2005, p.186).

1.3.4.1 Language difficulties

The most common problem is in language itself which is based more specifically on vocabulary and grammatical structures. It is argued that literary texts are loaded

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with complex structures and can induce problems for language learning purposes. McKay (2001) and Savvidou (2004) criticize the language of literary texts for being far from the conventions of Standard English established for the different levels of the students. Also, Robson (1989) states that due to its syntactic and lexical difficulty, literature is seen to be able to do *“little or nothing to help students to become competent users of the target language”* (p.25).

1.3.4.2 Cultural Barriers

Another problem emerges as a result of cultural issues when using literary texts in EFL classrooms. According to McKay's (2001) contention *“literature is saturated with cultural concepts that might frustrate the unexperienced reader”*. Besides, the question about presenting different cultures still exists and there are different views. As Tomlinson (2001) maintains *“there is a need to humanize the textbooks and one way to actualize this want is to localize the text books with interesting L1 topics and themes”*. While, other scholars take side with the other camp and consider language as culture and culture as language where foreign culture is essential for EFL/ESL students (Brown, 2007). On the other hand, McKay (1982) proposes three ways to exterminate the linguistic and cultural problems:

- Using simplified texts.
- Using easy texts that are appropriate to the level of the learners
- Using young adult texts because they are stylistically less complex.

So, each individual is born in a special cultural context which results in acquiring its different aspects in life. In general terms, culture could be outlined as a collection of social beliefs, values, religions, credence and ideologies accepted by most members in a social community. Although, cultural barriers are considered as those traditions which become hurdles in path of understanding or teaching/learning completely different languages, among which body language, religious beliefs, and social habits are noteworthy.

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1.3.4.3 Selection of Materials

Text selection is another difficult task for both teachers and students. In this respect, *“learners’ language proficiency, age, gender and background knowledge should be taken into consideration when choosing a text”* (Khatib, et al, 2011, p.204). All these factors are important since students do not have any linguistic, literary or cultural competence to deal with a complex text. Some scholars consider also the unfamiliarity with certain literary genres and the length of the text as sorts of problems because of the lack of knowledge most of the students feel frightened when working on a long text. Carter and Long (1991) argue that *“these problems can be overcome by selecting an appropriate text for an appropriate group of language learners”*.

1.4 The Teaching of Culture in Literature

For the sake of a cultural education that aimed at raising awareness of students’ native and target culture, literature remains the powerful agent to ensure the students’ ability to identify and enhance their personal cultural understanding. Yet, the significance of teaching culture in and through language teaching has been recognized and widely discussed over the last two centuries.

1.4.1 Definition of Culture

The word culture originates from the Latin *cultura* stemming from *colere*, which means *“to cultivate”* (Hofstede, 2001). Culture is a complex concept and has been variously defined by different scholars. According to the English anthropologist Tylor (1871) culture is *“that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society”*. Besides, the definition of culture in language teaching is frequently related to capital “C” and small “c”. On one hand, culture can be seen as civilization, the great achievements of people as reflected in their history, social institutions, works of art, architecture, music, and literature, commonly referred to as big “C” (Hu, 2002). On the other hand, culture can be viewed as the customs,

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traditions, or practices that people carry out as part of their everyday lives, i.e. small “c” (Halverson, 1985).

Furthermore, Samovar, et al (1998) see culture as the deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, religion and concepts of the universe acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving. Therefore, culture is not genetically inherited but learned, it is all what we are, the way we feel, think and behave as Kramsch (2006) states that culture is synonymous to *“the way of life and everyday behaviors of members of speech communities, bound together by common experiences, memories, and aspirations”* (Kramsch, 2006, p.322).

1.4.2 Native Culture Teaching

English is currently the most widely spoken language in the world. Due to its spread, it has been used for different purposes around the world notably in education. So, many writers use it in order to produce their literary works and portray their cultural identities. This is what led EFL students to be more familiar with this global language.

However, literature cannot escape its cultural implication, and literature is a response to a relationship between the culture of the students and that represented by the current readers of literature being presented (Chen Ben, 2004). In this respect, the interaction with a literary text depends on a reader’s familiarity with the cultural assumptions in it that should be understood and accepted. This goes in line with Kramsh (1998) reasoning that the most essential skill that speakers of foreign languages should possess is *“adaptability to select forms of accuracy and those forms of appropriateness that are called for in a given social context of use”* (Kramsh, 1998, p.27). Therefore, language and literature represent the true identity of culture and the use of both by teachers help students to develop competence and enhance students’ interest in thinking deeply about the ideas expressed by the selected works and relate them to their own experience. In other words, to

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encourage the parallel study of both native and target language cultures that should be adapted to the students' national and social identity.

Mckay (2003), also, notes the important point that students need to talk about their own culture when they talk to people from other cultures. In addition, reliance on learners' culture as the point of departure for language teaching will make them critically aware and respectful of their own culture and prevent the development of a sense of inferiority which might result from a total reliance on the target language culture where only the praiseworthy features of the culture are presented.

1.4.3 Target Culture Teaching

The study of a target language culture along with its educational and intellectual influence is one of the major goals of language teaching/learning process. It is used to describe the knowledge, skills and competences developed by the students. Also, it can help students to become conscious of their own cultural identity. Likewise, Lessard-Clouston (1997) considers the importance of developing knowledge about target culture together with skills necessary for mastering communication and behavior in the target culture. So, the teachers' role is *“creating an atmosphere of mutuality and respect”* (Ellis,2003,p.17).

In the same vein, it is important to point out that much of the literature is methodological and theoretical in nature. It is also inconsistent in how it views the culture teaching process. On the one hand, Stern says: *“literature can help students understand, empathize and vicariously participate in the target culture”* (Stern,1987:48).On the other hand Bex (1994) suggests that:

Awareness of cultural diversity can be introduced into the classroom gradually, first by developing the pupils' perceptions of the grosser differences between their own culture and that of the target language, and then by comparing linguistic variation within their own culture with linguistic variation within the target culture.

Bex (1994, p.60)

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Therefore, the teaching of the target language culture in a foreign language classroom attempts to enhance students' cultural awareness and improve their communication competence. It is also necessary to engage with the linguistic and non-linguistic practices of the culture and to gain insights into the way of living in other societies.

1.4.4 Intercultural Language Teaching

Intercultural language teaching and learning, as it is termed in literature, is different from approaches to teaching language that focus on language without reference to culture. It involves the fusing of language, culture and learning into a single educative approach that are fundamentally interrelated at the center of the learning process. Besides, intercultural language learning helps learners' understanding of their native language and culture in relation to a target language and culture, as Bredella points out that *“intercultural awareness makes us relativize our own cultural values and prevents fundamentalist attitudes”* (2003:237). Similarly, it raises awareness of the pervasive presence of culture in language. It is also used to interact, explore, compare and experience languages and cultures in order to promote their competencies. Skopinskaja aptly remarks that:

Students should not only be aware of similarities and differences between the target culture and their own cultural background but also they should establish a ‘sphere of interculturality’ by learning to observe the world from the perspective of others, thus decentering their own perspective.

Skopinskaja (2003, p.40-41)

Indeed, the importance of enhancing the students' cultural awareness should contribute to better understanding of other peoples and cultures through foreign language curriculum by using literary texts that are comprehensive and that can lead to critical reflection, also, to promote the favorable development of the learner's whole personality and sense of identity.

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1.5 Cultural Awareness in Foreign Language Teaching

Culture awareness has become an important focus in the development of language education both nationally and internationally in order to prepare students for intercultural communication. In the same context, Hadely (1993) asserts that *“cultural understanding must be promoted in various ways so that students are sensitive to other cultures prepared to live more harmoniously in the target language community”*. That is to help learners gain an understanding of the target culture since culture is inseparable from language education.

1.5.1 Cultural Awareness

Cultural awareness is a more general and non-technical term, allowing a multitude of interpretations which better reflect the complexity of the content of language teaching. Tomlinson (2001) holds that *“cultural awareness involves a gradually developing inner sense of the equality of cultures, an increased understanding of your own and other people’s cultures, and a positive interest in how cultures both connect and differ”* (cited in Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2004, p.3).

Furthermore, Tomalin and Stempleski (1993) posit that cultural awareness encompasses three qualities:

- Awareness of one’s own culturally-induced behavior
- Awareness of the culturally-induced behavior of others
- Ability to explain one’s cultural standpoint

So, encouraging students to recognize their cultural identity in relation to others, and analyzing their real world and academic needs may increase their cultural awareness. This latter can help learners broaden their mind and achieve cultural empathy and sensitivity. Within a similar point, Benmoussat (2003) points out that:

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The development of cultural awareness consists primarily in the introduction of facts of all kinds: geographical knowledge, knowledge about the contributions of the target culture to world civilizations in the arts and sciences, and so forth, knowledge about the differences in the way of life, as well as an understanding of values and attitudes in the target language community.

Benmoussat (2003, p19)

Accordingly, cultural awareness is related to various forms of knowledge of the target culture either cognitive or behavioral. That is, knowing about differences and similarities in the way of life, as well as, conducting learners' ability in culturally appropriate ways. Yet, cultural awareness is fundamental in foreign language teaching particularly in the development of intercultural communicative competence and language proficiency; the basic teaching goals of foreign languages.

1.5.2 Culture Conflict

Levine and Adelman (1982) maintain that “*cultural conflicts occur as a result of misinterpretations, ethnocentrism, stereotypes, and prejudice*”. Thus, in order to prevent these conflicts, it is possible to raise students' awareness of attitudes and sensitivity as well to cross-cultural differences without losing their cultural identities of course.

Besides, the implications of cultural change for conflict are varied. On the one hand, the feeling of culture to change can lead to social instability, and this may in turn lead to conflict. On the other hand, possibilities for change mean that cultures may prove adaptive to new situations, and that individual bearers of local cultures may use cultural resources to accommodate to change, and respond to potential conflict in pro-social ways.

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Furthermore, cultural conflict may also occur between individuals or social groups that are separated by cultural boundaries. But individuals, even in the same society, are potentially members of many different groups, organized in different ways by different criteria, for example, by language, religion, ethnicity, or nationality. That's why Kramsch (1993) associates culture conflict to culture teaching and believes that *“culture should be taught as interpersonal processes rather than presenting cultural facts, teachers should assist in coming to grips with the other cultures”*. In addition, Liddicoat (2002, p.8) mentions that *“the dynamic view of culture requires learners to actively engage in culture learning, rather than only learn about the cultural information of the target culture in a passive way”*. This means that learners should be encouraged to view cultural facts as situated in time and space to developing an awareness of, and sensitivity towards, the values and traditions of other societies.

Then, in order to prepare students for intercultural interactions, foreign language lessons can be designed according to students' reflection on their beliefs about the target culture in conjunction with opportunities for students to participate in active inquiry regarding the products, practices, and perspectives of another culture (McGee, 2011). Also, Byram (1997) suggests that *“teachers can incorporate an intercultural stance into the curriculum by providing opportunities for learners to practice skills in analysis, interpretation, communication, and interaction in relation to the products and practices of the target culture”*. So, in the foreign language classroom, learning tasks must provide opportunities for students to practice the skill of critical evaluation, as well as, they should be given the opportunity to pursue original thought and ideas, and encouraged to question received opinion.

1.5.3 Culture and language teaching

Language is a social institution shaping and shaped by the society at large in which it plays an important role. According to Wei (2005), *“language has a dual character: both as a means of communication and a carrier of culture”* (p,56).

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So, the relation between language and culture is that language is part of culture and culture is part of language. They are inseparable.

Furthermore, foreign language learning is composed of several components, including communicative competence as well as cultural competence, i.e. a change in attitudes towards one's own or another culture. That's why Gao (2006) suggests that cultural studies should have an important place in EFL classes in order to enhance students' cultural awareness and improve their communication competence.

On the other hand, culture is considered as the fifth language skill to be taught because of the international role of the English language and globalization. Tomalin (2008), likewise, argues that the teaching of culture should include:

- Cultural values
- Cultural behaviour
- Cultural skills

Besides, English language teachers should notice that the differences between the Algerian culture and other cultures are much more salient than the similarities and our students need to be sensitive to these differences. As Benmoussat states: *“successful communication in the target culture is also dependent on cultural awareness of the visual, audible and tactile activities”* (2003, p.93). Additionally, Miladinovic (2013) has concluded that to make students aware of the cultural features reflected in the language, teachers are urged to make those topics explicit by discussion in relation to their linguistic as well as cultural norms. However, it is very important to help students understand their native culture and the one explored in the classroom by using different strategies in an ideal learning environment, where students can explore and reflect on their own culture and/or the target culture and language as well.

1.6 Students Assessment in Literature

Literature is considered as a promising tool for language learning purposes in EFL classes. It promotes cultural and intercultural awareness since it deals with

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universal concepts that are common to all languages and cultures of the whole world. According to Langer (1997) *“literature can open horizons of possibility allowing students to question, interpret, connect and explore”* (p.607).

Thus, the question of what to assess and how in the area of literature is of great importance. Teachers of literature would probe students’ ability not just to remember and to understand but also to apply, analyze and synthesize information and concepts. These skills correspond to higher level cognitive learning objectives articulated by Bloom’s Taxonomy as modernized in the following figure:

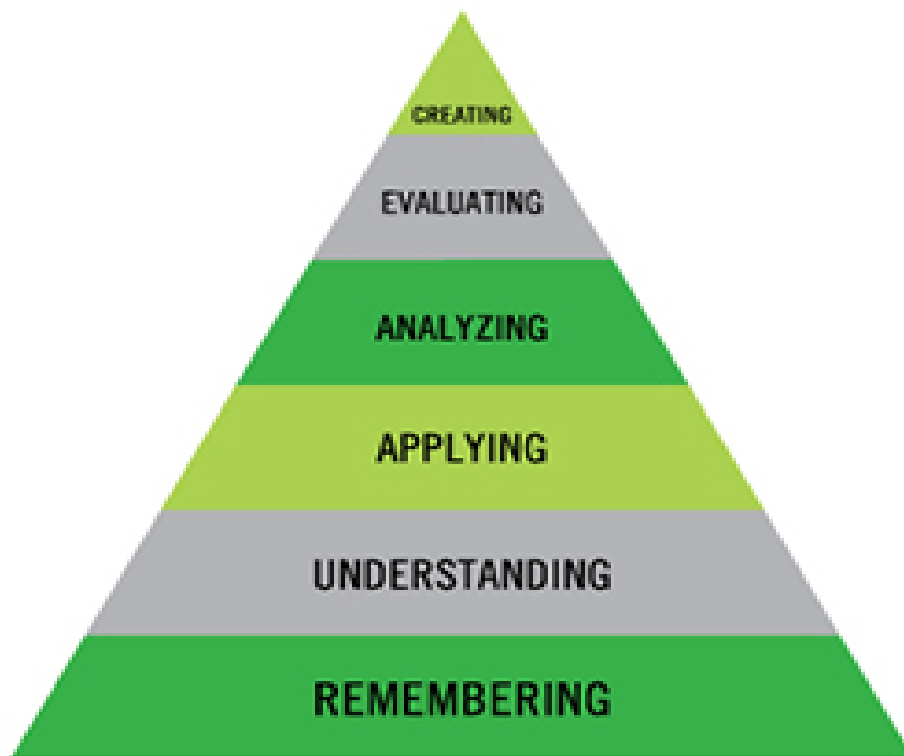


Figure 1-3 Bloom's Taxonomy by Airasian, P.W. (2000,p.29)

So, Bloom’s Taxonomy is a method created by Benjamin Bloom to categorize the levels of reasoning skills that students should use for effective learning. There are six levels to Bloom's Taxonomy:

- *Knowledge*: to check learner ability to recall basic information.
- *Comprehension*: to confirm understanding.
- *Application*: to use or apply knowledge.

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- *Analysis*: to interpret elements and to see if the information can be broken into components.
- *Synthesis*: to create or develop plans.
- *Evaluation*: to assess critical thinking.

So that, the taxonomies seek to establish a mental hierarchy from knowledge to evaluation on the cognitive level and from reception to a characteristic approach on the affective level. That is, the feedback from assessment and Blooms' Taxonomy is often used to improve teaching and learning practices.

Therefore, the fields of literature and culture are particularly suited to the use of innovative pedagogy, though in most courses traditional approaches still prevail. Nevertheless, there is evidence that new approaches use the whole range of learner-centered teaching and learning methods such as various types of group work, project work and autonomous learning. Also, there is strong emphasis on the fostering of self-evaluation and reflection by students.

In this regard, new forms of assessments and evaluation could be used namely:

- Active participation
- Continuous assessment and assignments
- Group presentations
- Portfolios
- Final reports on project work
- Peer review
- Self evaluation

While traditional assessment methods still persist, to a large extent, on the final written and oral exams that is still insisting on the reproduction of knowledge rather than on the achievement of competences. The use of essays is either as part of continuous assessment or as a final subject evaluation carried out by the teacher who usually decided on the methodology followed. The provision of assessment criteria and distribution of marks are good practice, and in many cases are a quality assurance requirement.

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Therefore, from the different traditional assessment methods, the portfolio assessment technique is as a valuable tool that has been adopted by many researchers within the educational contexts. It gives both teachers and students a controlled space to document, review and analyse content learning. As Jardine (1996) states: *“portfolios are a collection of students work that allows assessment by providing evidence of effort and accomplishments in relation to specific instructional goals”*. By reflection on their own work, learners begin to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their own work (self-assessment). That is, in portfolio assessment it is the quality that counts, not the quantity.

At last and not least, assessment in literature is a part of the planning cycle for teaching. It is closely bounds up with the teaching/learning objectives. That is the assessment of students in literature has to be appropriate to the discipline with all things that are centrally important for the students, i.e. to be able to do, to know and to understand what has been learned.

1.7 conclusion

The present chapter has highlighted the most common comforts and difficulties the EFL students are confronted to, mainly in the assessment of their cultural awareness through literature. Also, it has been devoted to the definitions of the most important concepts of this research which are assessment, culture and literature. In fact, it has been shown that assessment of students learning begins with the educational values and also it can be used for illuminating questions that students really care about. Besides, this chapter has dealt with the various theoretical and practical issues concerning the role of literature including its different approaches to language teaching in enhancing the linguistic, communicative and cultural competences. However, the primary focus is on the strategies and methods used for the assessment of literary works in the cultural side.

Chapter Two

Methods of Data Collection

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Chapter Two

Methods of Data Collection

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of the present research is to highlight the way the students' cultural awareness is assessed in Literature through some women writers' novels. In order to reach the target of this research several methods and procedures are used to collect the necessary data. Accordingly, the following chapter assigns a full-time interest in describing the research instruments used in this study. Eventually, this chapter provides a general description of the English language teaching/learning situation as well as a general presentation of the women writers module which is used as a means to get more information.

2.2 An Overview of the Teaching/Learning Situation

The present research is concerned with the students of University of Tlemcen, within the English Department and more precisely with first year master students specialized in Literature and Civilization.

The University of Tlemcen "Abou Bekr Belkaid" started its function as a centre to carry on high studies and research in the late 70's. After several years of progress and maturation, the University of Tlemcen witnessed the birth of the Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages among the eight (8) faculties that are constituted. This faculty is encompassing two (2) Departments: the Department of French and the Department of English, comprising this latter two (2) sections notably English and the section of Translation.

By 2009, the University of Tlemcen, like other universities around the globe adopt the LMD system (Licence – Master – Doctorat) for the sake of keeping pace

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with Globalization and enhancing the teaching/learning process. During the three years, EFL students are enrolled in a curriculum which consists of several modules related to the study and practice of English language as well as to Literature studies and Civilization. In the third year, the students obtain their Academic Licence Degree which is considered as a common core at the national level. Then, the students will have the choice to integrate the Master studies that consist of four (4) specialties and are as follow: **1) Literature and Civilization, 2) Language Sciences, 3) Didactics and Assessment, and 4) Language and Culture.** As mentioned before, this research deals with 1st year master students 'Literature and Civilization' and one among the modules they have is Women Writers module.

2.2.1 General Description of Women Writers Module

Since the beginning of their studies, the students are acquainted with male writers from Shakespeare to Dickens and Henry James be it in American or British Literature. For the sake of knowing some female writers, the module of women writers aims to introduce the excellent output of British and American writers in the long 18th to 20th century. Themes addressed through women's writing may include piety, suffering, oppression, fight, education and success of these women.

2.2.1.1 Time Allocation

The women writers module is delivered to students following timetabled sessions that include lectures and discussions. In this respect, the time allotted to this module for 1st year Master students is three (3) hours per week divided into two (2) sessions of one hour and a half (1h30m) during the two semesters.

2.2.1.2 The Syllabus and Coefficient

The main readings of this module include different female writings for both British and American writers, starting from the 18th century where teachers select a chapter to be discussed and analysed.

The table below may give a description of the women writers syllabus that is currently designed to 1st year Masters students 'Literature & Civilization'.

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Syllabus Design	Literary Text	Women Writers
1st Semester British Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Vindication of the Rights of Women (1792) - The Mysteries of Udolpho (1794) , from chapter 18 - Frankenstein (1818) chapter 23 - Wuthering Heights , chapter 3 - North & South , chapter 15: Masters & Men 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mary Wollstonecraft - Ann Radcliffe - Mary Shelley - Emily Brontë - Elizabeth Gaskell
2nd Semester American Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl (1861) - The Yellow Wallpaper (1892) - The Golden Slipper - Problem IV: The Grotto Spectre – (1915) - The Coulor Purple 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Harriet Jacobs - Charlotte Perkins Gilman - Anna Katherine Green - Alice Walker

Table 2.1 Syllabus of 1st year Master Students Module of Women Writers

It is noticeable that from these literary texts, the students are supposed to recognize the way women writers reflect upon and resist stereotypes of women in literature. Also, they will examine the historical and social conditions of women and gender roles as reflected in literature.

Additionally, the coefficient attributed to the module of women writers is determined to five (5) and the students have two grades in this module: the exam and the formative assessment. In other words, formative assessment is replacing the test done in class and here the students are supposed to work on a project in a team work, having of course two objectives. The first one is to learn what are the

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advantages and drawbacks of group/team work and the second is to work on a novel written by a woman.

In the first semester it is '*The Janes Austen Project*', the students are asked to select one of the novels of Austen and work on it. Whereas in the second semester, they select an American writer, a woman of course, and work on her novel, this is on one hand. On the other hand, the teacher tells students to avoid written presentations, she asks them to get involved and to do it in forms of shows, clips or even adaptations on a CD (compact disc) that will be evaluated by the teacher at home.

2.3 Research Objectives

Within the present research, the question of what and how to assess in the area of cultural awareness is of great importance in order to achieve the objective. In fact, the interplay of knowledge, skills, attitudes and actions is fundamental in assessing the students' cultural awareness since it is a very rich field of language learning.

Accordingly, Literature teachers are considered as a major factor in developing intercultural understanding. **Bodycott & Walker (2000)** argue that '*the development of intercultural understanding [...] must begin with the teacher's attitude, and the scaffolds created to support student learning*' (in *Crabtree and Sapp, 2004, p.121*). Therefore, the role of the teacher is not limited only to present and interpret the content but also to assess and connect students with literary works that contribute to their overall education and to the development of their minds and knowledge.

Otherwise, using their cultural aspects (religion, tradition & culture) against the background of Literature, the students will perceive the courses in a new light and they will experience their learning. As Kumar posits:

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Higher Education must aspire to do more than teach the traditional academic curriculum. In today's global economy, our students must learn to make reasoned decisions about their personal lives and careers, and to consciously develop goals and personal planning skills that will enhance their employability.

Kumar (2007, p:13).

However, students' cultural awareness will be assessed in a conventional way and this is what enhance their motivation and make them identify themselves in the society and the world at large. Equally, the aim of this study is to make students contributing in the development of their personalities and prevent them from melting in other cultures.

2.4 Research Questions and Hypotheses

After giving the objective behind the present research work and before presenting the informants of this study, the researcher will explore the following research questions:

1. Do students assimilate the different cultural aspects via Literature mainly in the Victorian texts?
2. What are the characteristics of current assessment of cultural aspects through Literature courses?
3. How can learning objectives and assessment be improved?

Therefore, as a major step in the present research the following hypotheses will be tested :

- 1- Yes, the students can assimilate the different cultural aspects in the Victorian literary texts through the teaching of literature which plays a central role in raising the students' cultural awareness. It acts as telling them what is important in life and how life might be lived this way rather than that way.

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- 2- Cultural awareness can be assessed via Literature since the latter has not only disciplinary purposes but more broadly educational ones to prepare students for their civic responsibility and moral and ethical thoughtfulness as well.
- 3- The assessment of students' cultural awareness is based on teaching/learning methods that will encourage the students to think independently and critically. In addition, assessment will serve both curriculum aims and educational end goals.

Relying upon a specific design and different research tools, the aforesaid research questions and hypotheses will be discussed in the next point. In deed, they will be either confirmed or rejected.

2.5 Research Methodology

Within the present study, the researcher relies on different research tools in order to collect data mainly students' questionnaires, teachers' interviews, classroom observation and test analysis. The researcher takes 1st year Master students as a case study.

2.5.1 Case Study Research

The researcher adopted the case study method in order to get insightful knowledge about the case being studied. Besides, the case study is variously defined. Eckstein (2002) offers a technical explanation when he said: "*A case can be defined technically as a phenomenon for which we report and interpret only a single measure on any pertinent variable.*" (Eckstein, 2002, p.124).

Furthermore, the case study is used as a means for gathering evidence or collecting data about what occurs during the research and why. In this respect Creswell (2002) argues that:

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A case study is a problem to be studied, which will reveal an in-depth understanding of a ‘case’ or bounded system, which involves understanding an event, activity, process or one or more individuals.

(Creswell, 2002, p.61)

Accordingly, this invites the researcher to look for the problem that resides in any necessary work either an event or a concept via the selection of one individual or a group of people used to draw generalizations and inferences about them and to suggest techniques for the assessment of the concerned case. Therefore, multiple tools such as questionnaires, interviews, classroom observation and test analysis have been used to get the causes and the results about the lack of assessment of students’ cultural awareness in literature.

2.5.2 Sampling

For the sake of investigating this study, the researcher selects the sample which is an indispensable strategy in data collection as Sapsford & Jupp (2006) point out: *“Sampling will often be the only feasible method of obtaining data, quite apart from questions of time and cost” (p.29).*

Thus the investigation involves informants chosen among students and teachers in the Faculty of Letters and Languages, Department of English, Section of English at the University of Tlemcen. All the sample population are EFL learners who pursue the Anglo-Saxon Literature and Civilization specialty in the flow of the academic year 2015-2016, and their profile is described as follow.

2.5.2.1 Learners’ Profile

The students involved in this study are first year Master students ‘Literature and Civilization’ under the LMD system and they have already obtained the Licence degree. They are 101 students aged between 21 and 26 years old. This number of students is used to obtain data in exam analysis. Whereas for the classroom observation, the sample population within this research consists of 70 students who

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are regular in their attendance. Hence, only 27 students, 15 girls and 12 boys answered the questionnaire.

The choice of such a sample population is based on the specialty 'Literature and Civilization' which is related to culture mainly in the module of women writers that is concerned with the Victorian Era. The era where culturally there was a transition away from the rationalism of the Georgian period toward romanticism and mysticism with regard to religion and social values.

2.5.2.2 Teachers' Profile

Four teachers of literature participated in the present research work. Their experiences vary from one teacher to another which are to be described as follow:

The first teacher holds a Magister degree in didactics of literary and civilization texts. He has an experience of 4 years in teaching both Literature and Civilization. He is preparing a Doctorate thesis as well.

The second teacher holds a PhD degree specialized in English Literature and Civilization. She has been university teacher for 8 years. Also, she is in charge of the module of Women Writers.

The third one is holding a Magister degree. She is specialized in different forms of literature namely American, African, Anglo-Saxon and Poetry. Also, she is undertaking a doctoral research.

The fourth teacher is a professor specialized in English Literature, having an experience of 15 years in teaching at the University of Tlemcen. She is in charge of LMD1, Master1 and Doctoral students, as well as the module of literature and Stylistics

In fact all the teachers have a common point which is the teaching of literature and all of them are permanent teachers at the University of Tlemcen, the department of English, section of English.

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2.6 Research Instruments

In order to triangulate the data, the researcher uses various procedures to consolidate the dependability and trustworthiness of the information obtained and their interpretation. The main practical tools the researcher has opted for are students' questionnaires, teachers' interviews and classroom observation. Additionally a test analysis has been done as a complement to classroom observation.

2.6.1 Students' Questionnaire

The questionnaire is one of the research instruments that can be used to take into consideration the ethical issue of research; it preserves anonymity of the respondents, therefore, they might feel freedom, autonomy and less fears when giving their responses.

This questionnaire appears with Mixed questions including Close-ended and Open-ended questions in order to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data. *Seliger and Shohamy (1989)* are of the opinion that “*close-ended questionnaires are more efficient because of their ease of analysis*”. On the other hand, *Gillham (2000, p.5)* argues that “*open questions can lead to a greater level of discovery.*” So it is better to have a mixed questionnaire in order to complement each other. However the questionnaire design is a critical point and the researcher should ensure that it is ‘valid, reliable and unambiguous’ (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p.438). Also, according to Oppenheim (1992), the questionnaire should be well constructed and it is:

Not some sort of official form, nor is it a set of questions which has been casually jotted down without much thought. We should think of the questionnaire as an important instrument of research, a tool for data collection. The questionnaire has a job to do its function is measurement.

(Oppenheim,1992, p.100)

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As far as this research work is concerned, the questionnaire comprises sixteen (16) questions addressed to seventy (70) students but only twenty-seven (27) have participated and have given their responses. Yet, the general objective of the questionnaire is to elicit valuable information from informants. It has been constructed for the purpose of refracting light on how and what to assess in students' cultural awareness.

2.6.1.1 Design of Students' Questionnaire

In the following part of the research, the researcher will describe the questions and will give the aim behind each one. As mentioned before, the questionnaire consists of sixteen (16) questions and there are as follow:

Question1: Students' profile

The first question is an introduction to students' profile that aims to cite the number of years they have studied English.

Question2 and 3: Students' attitudes and preferences

These two questions aim to know students' attitudes toward Literature and how do they perceive it. Also the type of Literature they prefer.

Questions 4 to 6: The role of Literature

Question 4: is to know what a literary text targets.

Question 5and 6: deal with the points that the teacher focuses on within a literary text and on the interest of students toward a major point which is culture.

Question7 and 8: the control of the teacher upon the students when finding difficulties

These two questions complete each other, i.e. may be students will face some difficulties dealing with other cultures so they have to be controlled. Therefore, these questions show the difficulties and where the teacher controls the students in order to motivate them more.

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Question 9 to 12: A Brief idea about the Victorian Era according to students

Question 9 and 10: are concerned with the eras the students dealt with in the module of women writers and if there is an output from this.

Question 11 and 12: are about the evaluation of students through what they studied taking as a text and an era as examples.

Question 13 to 15: Assessment of students' cultural awareness

Question 13 and 14: aim to know if the students are assessed culturally and if they are aware of the differences and similarities between cultures.

Question 15: is to know if a literary text is helpful or not in order to assess the cultural awareness.

Question 16: General Suggestions

At last, this question gives the opportunity to students to propose their suggestions and their own point of views regarding the ways of assessing the students' cultural awareness through Literature.

2.6.2 Teachers' Interview

For the sake of gathering more information, the investigator has used another research instrument which is the interview. It is addressed to four (4) literature teachers to screen their perspectives and assumptions about the students' cultural awareness. Burns (1999, p.118) contends that *“Interviews are a popular and widely used means of collecting qualitative data”*. The researcher will get firsthand information directly from the informants and will understand what and how people perceive and interpret the world around them. Furthermore, the purpose of interview *“is to reveal existing knowledge in a way that can be expressed in the form of answers and so become accessible to interpretation”* (Flick, 2006, p.160).

Besides, the questions in the interview were fourteen (14) and they were semi-structured. The researcher has opted for this type of interview because of its flexibility and pleasant latitude as Oppenheim said:

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Unlike most other techniques requires inter-personal skills of a high order, putting the respondent at ease asking questions in an interested manner, noting down the responses without upsetting the conversational flow, giving support without introducing bias.

(Oppenheim, 1992.p45)

Accordingly, the interview might be done in a good atmosphere and it might be neither too rigid nor too open. Yet, the quality of the responses might be personal and based on first hand experiences. The general objective of the interview is to obtain information from teachers about the teaching of literature and the methods being used in assessing the students' cultural awareness.

2.6.2.1 Design of Teachers' Interview

The interview addressed to literature teachers consists of fourteen (14) semi-structured questions which are delineated as follow:

Question1 and 2: Teachers' profile

These two questions ask for the specialism and the experience in teaching of the interviewed teachers.

Questions 3 and 4: Literature teaching objectives using literary texts

They are about the objectives behind teaching Literature. Also they seek to know if the texts used are selected or designed in a syllabus.

Question 5 and 6: The difference between cultures and the focus on the cultural aspects

These questions aim to know on what cultural aspects the teacher focuses and if students make differences between cultures.

Question 7 and 8: The way the students' cultural awareness is assessed

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They are concerned with the module of women writers in which the researcher tries to know how the students' cultural awareness is assessed and if this module contributes to do it.

Question 9: The purpose behind teaching the Victorian Era

This question leads to have an idea about what the teacher wants to reach in teaching the Victorian Era.

Question 10 and 11: The strategies used in teaching a culture and the differences the teachers face

The purpose of these questions is to search for the strategies the teachers use and the problems they encounter when dealing with a target culture or different ones.

Question 12 and 13: Quantitative and qualitative assessment

Both of these questions deal with the major points that are assessed by the teacher especially in exams.

Question 14: Teachers' suggestions about the assessment of students' cultural awareness via Literature

This last question aims at gathering suggestions and obtaining teachers' point of views regarding the assessment of students' cultural awareness in general and the way they do it in particular.

2.6.3 Classroom Observation

Classroom observation is the third research tool used in the present study which is carried out purposefully to serve research questions and objectives. (*Burns, 1999, p.80*) contends that the researcher observes “*classroom interactions and events, as they actually occur*”. Also observation can be combined with questionnaires and interviews to collect “*relatively objective firsthand information*” (*Johnson & Turner, 2003, p.314*). On the other hand, *Merriam (1998, p.96)* believes that “*observation is a kind of data triangulation in order to substantiate the findings.*”

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The classroom observation was done in five sessions with the teacher who is in charge of the module of women writers. Additionally, it was done during the first semester of the academic year 2015-2016 with first year Master students and more precisely during the period when they dealt with the Victorian Era.

As a matter of fact, classroom observation was the way to reveal about literature classes and how students can assimilate the different cultural aspects, also the most important thing is the way of assessing the cultural awareness.

Moreover, classroom observation was based on both teacher and students. The teacher was the epicenter, he/she was well prepared for the class, transmitted information and asked questions. This is the way of analyzing a literary text. Then for the students, unfortunately they do not prepare the text at home but in the class they were really motivated and encouraged to voice their opinions.

Although, the teacher did not involve the students in group discussion. He/she analysed the text 80% literally and 20% culturally that's why in the exam the assessment is rather based on the form and the content than on the cultural components of the excerpt where the students can identify themselves.

The observation schedule used during the class of literature in the module of women writers is summarized in the following grid:

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N°	Check list
1	-The teacher is regularly present on time.
2	-The teacher appears relaxed and well prepared for class (has materials/equipment available and organized).
3	-The students are motivated.
4	-The teacher uses printed texts.
5	-The students prepare the text at home.
6	-The teacher does the literary analysis
7	-The teacher speaks about those who live in different circumstances and in other historical times within the analysis.
8	-The students are aware of what they should pay attention to and what they can afford to ignore from the text.
9	-The teacher analyses the text from different cultural points of view.
10	-The students are encouraged to voice their differences and give their personal opinion.
11	-The students are encouraged to answer each other's questions
12	-The teacher aims at preparing the students for their overall lives via the message of the text.
13	-The teacher assesses students' cultural awareness after finishing with the text.

Table 2.2 List of classroom observation

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2.6.4 Test

Test is mainly another self-design tool used in this research to collect data. The investigator has chosen one type among the different types of test which is the Diagnostic Test. The purpose of using such a research instrument is to confirm, adding to classroom observation, if the assessment of students' cultural awareness is really done or not in the exam. In this regard, tests:

- Help identify level of knowledge or skill (achievement and accountability)
- Results are easily quantified.
- Individual performances can be easily compared.
- Help determine if intervention has made a difference in knowledge or skill level.

(Colosi and Dunifon, 2006,p.3)

Therefore, the diagnostic test has the role to assess the learners' interpretation, understanding and cultural awareness through the content of a literary work. Also, it can be viewed as "*a method of measuring a person's ability or knowledge in a given area*" (Brown,1994, p.252).

It is worth noting that the test was done and corrected by the teacher. The investigator in his/her turn has done the analysis of the students' interpretation and the teacher' assessment at the same time taking into consideration the cultural awareness as a major task. Below (figure 2.1), the exam topic addressed to first year master students specialized in Literature & Civilization.

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Masterl Lit & Civ

First Term Women Writers Exam

Choose one of the following topics:

1) In most early British literature a woman is often presented as only one thing: an object. They can be objects of desire, objects of beauty, or merely objects to be owned, but it is rare that a woman is anything more than that. It is even more uncommon to find a female character in literature that is presented as an equal to the men around her. Discuss.

2) Gothic literature has been notorious for the patriarchy in which it entails, as well as the violence that is continuously enacted on the female characters. In the different novels, the role of women has been depicted in gothic manner, but each in its own different-way. Some authors completely disregard women in their works, while others include them to have characters that reinforce the status quo of the female being an educator and nurturer. Despite the differences, each work reflects some sense of the roles that women played during the time in which it was written. Discuss

Figure 2.1 Exam topic (1st year Master / Lit & Civ)

2.7 Methods of Data Analysis

A key player in this part of data collection is to characterize the research study's methodology either as qualitative, quantitative or as involving both qualitative and quantitative methods which is typically referred to as mixed methods. Therefore, the way the investigator can enhance the ability of research designs is by adopting mixed methods that offer an especially promising path in supporting rigorous inquiry and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data.

2.7.1 Qualitative Research Method

Qualitative research method is considered to be particularly suitable for gaining an in-depth understanding and description. Also, it provides insights into the setting of a problem that makes it exploratory and investigative in nature. In other words,

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This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.

(Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p.3)

Accordingly, this implies that qualitative research is the description of the interactions among participants and researchers, i.e. personal experiences, in naturalistic context. Also, for Hiatt (1986) qualitative research explores meaning, purpose or reality. As a result, it is primarily guided by concrete material at hand that are used in analysis to discover patterns such as changes over time or possible causal links between variables in a given situation.

2.7.2 Quantitative Research Method

The main purposes of this research method are the quantification of the collected data, the generalization of results and the measurement of the incidence of various views or opinions. Besides, the quantitative research method includes various forms of instruments and uses statistical techniques for the analysis of data. For Leedy (1993) quantitative research method *'is used to answer questions on relationships within measurable variables with an intention to explain, predict and control a phenomena'*.

Therefore, the major element in quantitative research method is the explanation of a phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analysed using statistics. That is, it deals with anything that is measurable in a systematic way of investigation. Thus, this research method ensures objectivity in the conduct of the study and the generality of findings. According to Harwell quantitative method is frequently described as deductive in nature, in the sense that inferences from tests of statistical hypotheses lead to general inferences about characteristics of a population.

Both methods were used in this research to analyse the data gathered, since they emphasize truth, applicability and neutrality to assure quality. This was noticed

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through the nature of instruments used namely questionnaire, interview, classroom observation and the test analysis as complement to the third instrument.

2.8 Conclusion

In the present chapter, the investigator gave a general description of Literature teaching/learning situation within the University of Tlemcen, department of English. Describing also the module concerned with this research which is of women writers. Besides, it aims to describe the methods used in collecting data and to present the sample population and the instruments used during the research. All this was described after exposing the research objectives by restating the research questions and the hypotheses. At last, the researcher explained the qualitative and quantitative research methods used when analyzing the results obtained, via the help of different instruments, that would be analysed and discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Three

Data Analysis and Results

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Chapter Three

Data Analysis and Results

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter the researcher has provided an overview of English teaching/learning situation concerning Master students at the University of Tlemcen, as well as a general description of the module of Women writers that the researcher dealt with. Besides, the researcher has presented all the methods and research instruments used for data collection. As a result, the aim of the following chapter is to analyse the results obtained from all of the questionnaire, the interview, classroom observation and exam analysis. So all this may confirm the hypotheses of the research work and may enable the researcher to provide further suggestions and recommendations for the sake of the assessment of students' cultural awareness through Literature.

3.2 Data Analysis

The data collected for this research are based on all types of informants' point of views. While analysing, the researcher used both quantitative and qualitative data and this through students' questionnaire, teachers' interview, classroom observation and test analysis.

3.2.1 Students' Questionnaire

The questionnaire was addressed to 1st year Master students. It was distributed to seventy (70) students but only twenty-seven (27) have given their answers. They are fifteen (15) girls and twelve (12) boys aged between 21 and 26 years old. The questionnaire is composed of sixteen (16) questions that are a combination of close-ended questions and open-ended questions.

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3.2.1.1 Results of Students' Questionnaire

Question 1: Students' Profile

The first question aims at having an idea about the number of years the students have studied English and the responses vary. The majority takes into consideration only the three years of Licence and first year of Master that is four (4) years. The others have either taken the repetitive years or have counted the middle and secondary school years.

The results are elicited in the following table:

Number of Students	Number of Years
4	3
13	4
1	5
3	8
1	10
4	11
1	Not mentioned

Table 3.1 Students' Learning English & number of years

Question 2 : Students' Attitudes toward Literature

The second question aims to know the students' attitudes toward the module of Literary Studies. The majority of the students that is represented by twenty-two (22) students (81%) reply positively. The remaining ones are divided into two groups, one of them (4%) replies negatively and the others (15%) are neutral vis-à-vis this module. The findings are illustrated on the following figure.

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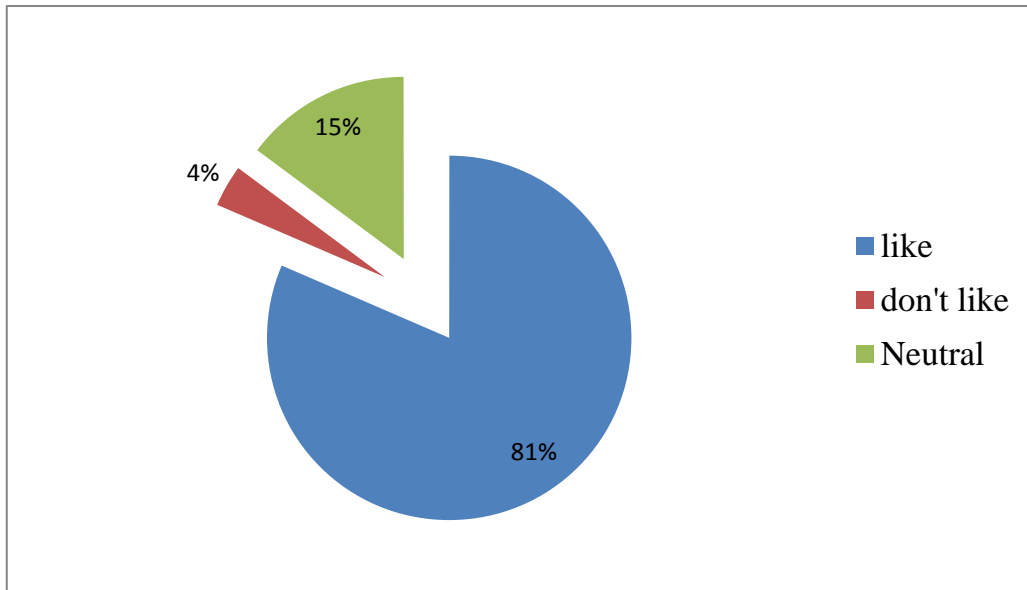


Figure 3.1 Students' Attitude towards Literary Studies

Question 3: The students' preferences for different types of Literature.

It is revealed that a great number of students opt for the British Literature representing sixteen (16) students. One (1) of the informants chooses the American Literature, four (4) of them select the African Literature. The remainder six (6) students have two choices; that is they choose two types at the same time.

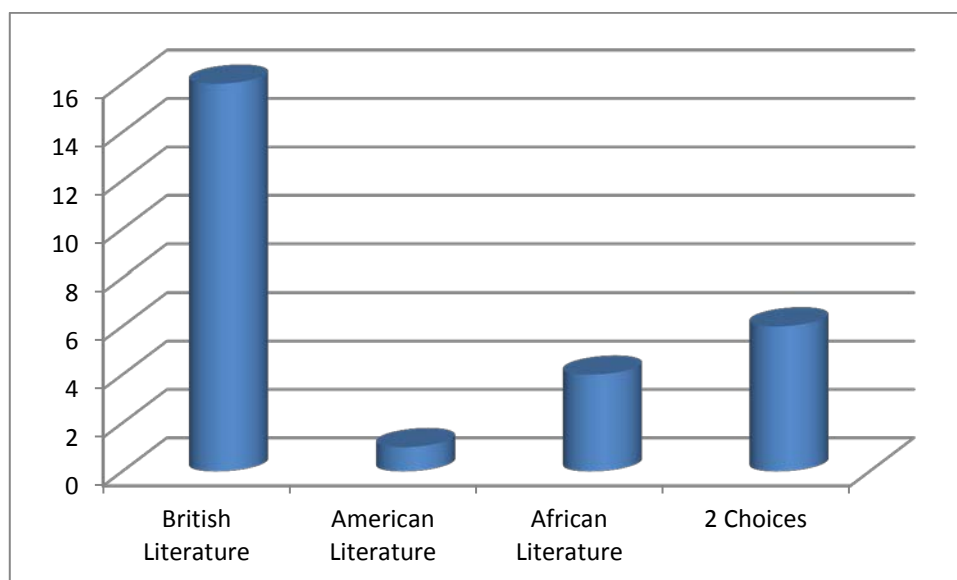


Figure 3.2. Students' Preferences For Different Types of Literature

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Question 4 to 6: The Essential item the students gain from Literary Studies.

Question 4: From this question, the informants give the most important elements in teaching Literature. According to the answers, nine (9) students learn about the English language via Literature representing 33%. Thirteen (13) students learn about the target culture represented by 49%. Whereas two (2) respondents (7%) give their own personal reasons which are to learn other cultures, languages, traditions and religion. The three (3) remaining students (11%) have chosen two propositions.

Question 5: The aim behind this question is to know the essential points the teacher focuses on when dealing with a literary text. The great majority has selected 2 or 3 points from the multiple choice given and this majority is represented by fifteen (15) informants (56%). Those who see the focus on the target culture are seven (7) informants (26%), and for the language and the text are two (2) informants for each (7%), and the one (1) informant (4%) who remains chooses the author.

Question 6: This question is concerned with the way literature raises the learners' interest about foreign cultures. (96%) of the informants agree since they learn about other cultures, societies and languages except one (1) student (4%) who doesn't give his/her opinion.

Question 7: Students' difficulties toward other cultures

This question includes the difficulties the students encounter when dealing with other cultures different from their own. From the answers nineteen (19) students do not have any problem, but eight (8) students face a lot of difficulties especially with the new vocabulary and words, different thoughts and views and different religions and traditions.

Question 8: Teachers' evaluation during the lecture

The purpose of this question is to know when do teachers evaluate the learners' attitudes and motivation via what they learn from the target culture. It is revealed by six (6) informants (22%) that 'before' starting the analysis of the literary texts the

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teacher takes five minutes to evaluate the students' knowledge about the topic they will deal with. Seven (7) informants(26%) mention 'after', that is when the lecture is finished, the teacher tries to have a feedback from the students to determine the level of their learning. Then, the majority which is represented by fourteen (14) informants (52%) mention that the control is done 'before and after' the session. That is at the beginning of the lecture, the students have the opportunity to discuss and give some information about the topic they are concerned with. The same thing is done when they finish it. They are asked, at the end of the session, to comment on the text and a debate is opened.

Question 9 to 12: Students' assessment of what they acquired during literature sessions.

Question 9: The following question inquires the periods the students have dealt with in the module of women writers included in the curriculum. The students are a little bit confused with this question. For four (4) students (15%) there is only one era which concerns the Victorians. Twelve (12) students (44%) state that in the first semester they had the opportunity to get information about two different eras which are the Elizabethan era that refers to Romanticism and the Victorian era that refers to Realism. The other eleven (11) students (41%) may be do not know since there is no response on their sheet.

Question 10: Its aim is to know if the students' cultural awareness is influenced by what they learn especially about the Victorian Era. So twelve (12) students representing 44% have positive answers, that is the great advances made by the Victorians influence their cultural awareness, first by knowing the differences and similarities found in societies mainly in religion, tradition and thoughts. Then having an idea about the advantages and disadvantages of these scientific discoveries. While four (4) students (15%) are not influenced by these advances since it is something done in the past, they do not care about it. Whereas, the eleven (11) students who remain representing (41%) have no answer.

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Question 11: The purpose of this question is to know how do students understand and interpret the main idea of a literary text they have already dealt with 'Frankenstein (chapter23) by Mary Shelly'. The twenty-one (21) informants represented by 78% understand that the text is about the relationship between man and science and how can man give much importance to the new technology and neglecting all what concern his family. The text, also, shows the position of women in the society at that time. So, there is the absence of feeling and emotions between human beings. The other six (6) informants representing 22% do not have any answer, unfortunately.

Question 12: By this question the students summarize the main cultural points acquired from the studied Victorian text. Those who answer are fourteen (14) students, they give approximately the same responses. The answers insist on the dominance of science at that period that led men not to care about anything. In other words, men have neither the sense of the word family nor a feeling toward human beings. Also, from the Victorian texts, students are able to make the difference between the social classes that exists in the British society. Moreover, the students notice that women writers in the Victorian Era use another style of writing where they reflect the society as it is in the real life. They are voicing their own opinions and challenging men as well. Concerning the thirteen (13) remainders, they do not answer.

Question 13 to 15: Assessment of students' cultural awareness.

Question 13 and 14: The process of assessing the students' cultural awareness is of a great importance. Although, most of the informants do not do a link between the cultural aspects of their society and the one of the writer, it is revealed by twenty students (74%). Six (6) students representing 22% have answered positively and show how to link the two aspects by comparing between them or giving what goes with their religion and culture or not. At last one (1) student represented by 4% doesn't give his/her answer.

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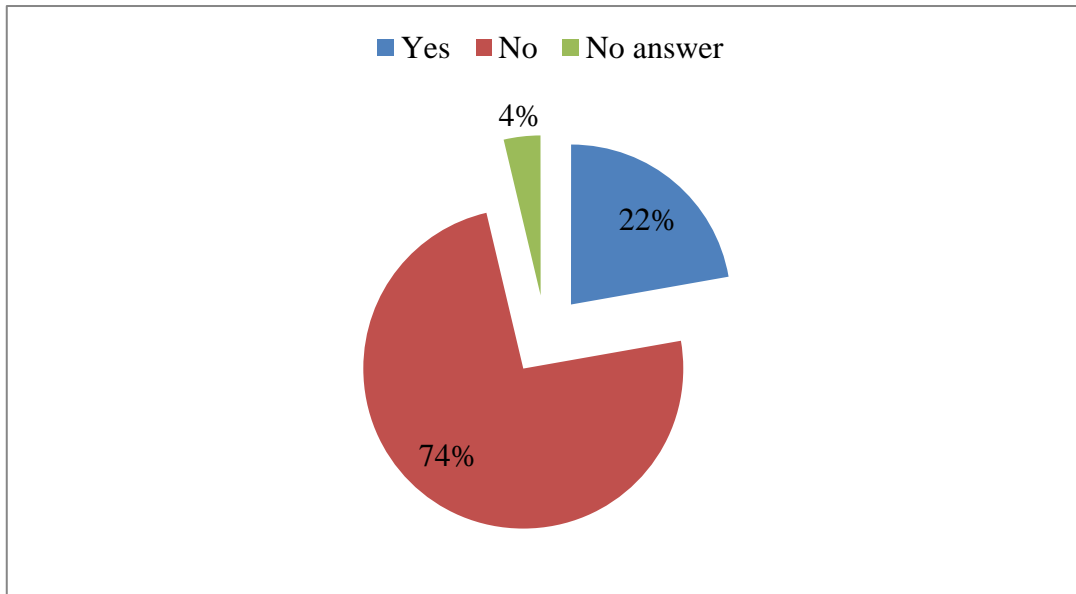


Figure 3.3 Assessment of Students' Cultural Awareness

Furthermore, question 14 aims at giving the way students are assessed by the teacher for their cultural understanding of the text. For twelve (12) informants representing 44%, the assessment is done via a debate /discussion or by asking different questions concerning the various elements of the text. Fourteen (14) informants (52%) revealed that they are not assessed on the cultural side. The teacher focuses only on the literary analysis with the participation of the students and there is no extra comment on the cultural elements of the text. Once more, one (1) student has no response.

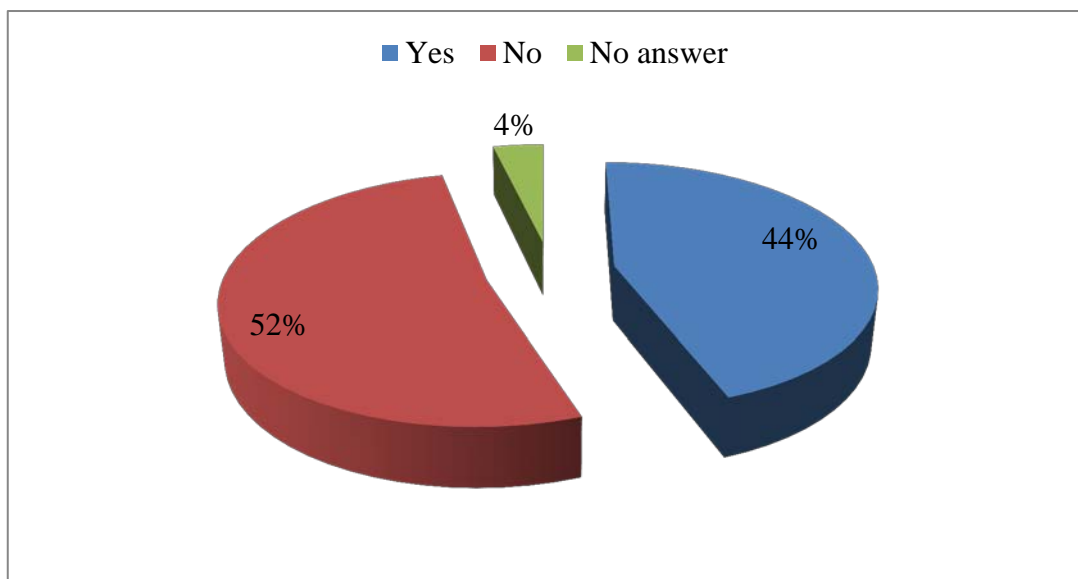


Figure 3.4 Assessment of Students' Cultural Understanding

Question 15: The aim of this question is to gauge the task of testing the cultural awareness through a literary text. For the majority, it is intermediate that is seventeen (17) students think so. For five (5) students it is really difficult. The remaining five (5) students are divided into two groups, three (3) reveal that it is an easy task to do and the two (2) others do not mention their opinion.

Question 16: Students' personal point of views and suggestions.

As a conclusion to the questionnaire, the researcher has proposed to the informants to give their personal point of views and suggestions. Twelve (12) students suggest dealing with different literary texts based on different cultural aspects in order to compare between them and evaluate them against their own cultural values. In other words, to be aware of what is right and what is wrong with our culture and religion. While the remaining fifteen (15) students prefer to not give any point of view or suggestion.

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3.2.1.2 Summary of the Results

The information gathered from the students' questionnaire revealed that the informants are interested by the module of Literature and more precisely women writers module, since the majority of the students are female. So, they gave more attention.

The purpose behind these questions is to understand and to know how students deal with new cultures through literature and how they are assessed by the teacher either during the class or in the exams. Therefore, it is possible to teach all kinds of literature without disturbing or opposing cultures, religious attitudes and feelings. So while analyzing a literary text, at first the teacher presents the literary work as it is. He also presents the contemporary society on which the work is written with reference to the cultural aspects as well. Then, in order to evaluate the students' understanding, the teacher, sometimes, asks them to compare that society and culture with the values of Muslim society. But most of the time, he asks some questions to the students to make them aware of the universality and absoluteness of certain values of life

From the collected data, one may say that students can make a difference between the various cultures they dealt with but without insisting on the positive and negative sides that are beneficial for them. Hence, for some students there is no problem when facing other cultures but for the others it is really difficult. Concerning the assessment of students' cultural awareness, it is noticed that students do not care a lot about this. They learn quantitatively and not qualitatively.

3.2.2 Teachers' Interview

The interview is one of the tools that was addressed to teachers of Literature and more precisely to four (4) of them during the end of the first semester of the academic year 2015-2016. The interview contains 14 questions organized in terms of aims regarding data about the assessment of students' cultural awareness through a literary text. Besides, the researcher, using the interview, had the possibility to probe the respondents for additional information or question.

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3.2.2.1 Results of Teachers' Interview

Question 1 and 2: Teachers' Profile

The interviewed teachers were four (4), they are specialized in literature. Their profiles are presented briefly through questions 1 and 2 and they are as follow:

The first teacher (T1) is specialized in Literature and Civilization. He has a Magister degree and he has been teaching literature in the Department of English for four (4) years.

The second teacher (T2) is also specialized in literature and more precisely in the English one. In addition to this, she is in charge of the module of women writers, she has a PhD degree and she has been university teacher for eight (8) years.

Then for the third teacher (T3), she is a woman too having a specialism in literature in its different forms notably, American, Anglo-Saxon, Poetry and she has been teaching for about fifteen (15) years.

The last interviewee (T4) is a professor who has been teaching the module of English Literature since 2000. She is in charge of the module of literature, stylistics and different seminars related to literary studies.

Question 3: Teachers' main objective in teaching literature

For this question, the informants gave different responses. The first teacher reveals that teaching literature is to arise the students' critical thinking and cultural awareness since literature is a form of knowledge based on the individual's experience. Whereas, the second teacher states that teaching literature has for an object making students understand the literary text literally and to see what is behind, i.e. to reflect the contemporary society. The third informant however, emphasizes mainly on the language and the content in literature. The fourth respondent as well, says that the main target in teaching literature is to make students loving literature as a special field since it is a matter of beauty, taste, love

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and appreciation. Also, she states that literature has a hidden meaning and beauty which has to be discovered by intensive and careful reading.

Question 4: the literary texts and the syllabus

As far as texts selection is concerned, teacher 1 asserts that there is a syllabus to follow but he gives the students the opportunity to choose some texts. Teacher 2 claims that what is designed more or less is the period but the choice of the texts is up to the teacher, i.e. the teacher can add or omit some texts or writers from the curriculum. Teacher 3 confirms that she is charged of the module so she makes the syllabus and therefore, she selects texts that are beneficial for her students. At last teacher 4 states that there is a selection of texts from the syllabus by skipping things that are outdated such as the Shakespearian texts.

Question 5: The focused cultural aspects

Seeking to know what are the main cultural aspects the teachers focus on while teaching Literature, both T1 and T2 claimed that they deal with social, political and historical aspects of the text. As T2 has been specialized in women writers, she tackles the position of women in the society and how they were seen culturally. Whereas, T3 stated that it depends on the text and on the ideas the author would convey. The fourth interviewee, trying her hand, to highlight the students' attention towards the differences found in cultures, ethics and values.

Question 6: Students' awareness of different cultures.

The answers of teachers 1, 2 and 3 are almost the same, that is for them students can spot the difference between, for example, British and American Literature. They are aware of the different types of literature and cultures. In contrast, for teacher 4, it is not so evident. For her, a literary text needs time to be accustomed to and the students don't do the difference unless the contribution of the teacher, that is to ask questions in order to check their understanding or awareness.

Question 7: Assessment of students' cultural awareness in the module of Literature.

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This question received a common answer from our informants about the assessment of students' cultural awareness in Literature. All the teachers, fundamentally, agree that there is no formative assessment but a sort of feedback during the class and not in the exams. In other words, the assessment is done in an unconscious way during the lecture but in the exam, it is rather based on a literary analysis of the content.

Question 8: The contribution of the literary text in raising the students' cultural awareness.

The target of this question is to know if the literary text dealt with in the module of women writers may contribute to raise the students' cultural awareness. The four (4) informants agree on that because this module tackles several periods of time from the 17th century to the 20th century and students are supposed to know what was happening in that period in Britain, America or elsewhere to understand the literary text.

Moreover, the content that they teach contributes a lot to raising their cultural awareness. That is to make a link between what they were familiar with and what they read about.

Question 9: The purpose of teaching the Victorian Era for EFL students.

This question is designed to know what are the teachers' objective in teaching the Victorian Era. One of the teachers claims that this period is taught in order to reflect the society and to describe very typical characters. Not far from this view, the other three interviewees state that this period is full of diversity at culture and language. This means that it is a rich era where the image of the Middle-East and the North is shown. Also, by teaching this era, the teachers give their students an idea about the African continent as viewed by the Victorians as well as the way writers express themselves about Africans and the style they use. So, this period is the most suitable one to raise students' awareness at cultural level.

Question 10 and 11: The strategies used to teach a target culture and the difficulties the teachers encounter

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Question 10: the four (4) respondents provided us with somewhat same answers. The text analysis is the technique used to teach literature and deal with different cultures. Sometimes there is also the use of all what is visual. However, to see the feedback of students, they use the debate confronting different views, also to develop their critical thinking.

Question 11: teachers 1, 2 and 3 stated that there is a kind of misconception and misunderstanding between different types of Literature. Whereas, teacher 4 added that the difficulties appear when the target culture is different at our ethics especially when it opposes religion, education and culture. This means that students when confronted to different cultures, they encounter some alien ideologies that invade their consciousness. At last, they all agree with the fact that difficulties are mainly in terms of tolerance. Students don't accept taboo topics.

Question 12 and 13: Assessment of students' understanding

Question 12: the purpose of this question is to find out whether the teachers agree with the fact that their students are assessed quantitatively rather than qualitatively. So the teachers' opinions concerning this question are different. T1, for him, it is a matter of preference and the teacher has to follow the students' behavior. T2 and T3 don't agree since the students' cultural awareness is not assessed in the exams. It is done unconsciously in the class. For the fourth informant, she agreed totally with this question but she stated that there are lot of obstacles to prepare a background for loving and appreciating Literature.

Question 13: At this stage of investigation, the informants were very clear about the non-existence of the assessment of students' cultural awareness unfortunately during the exams. For T3, the most difficult thing in Literature is to assess because it is subjective. Although, they all give much importance to form than content.

Question 14: Teachers' suggestions regarding the assessment of students' cultural awareness.

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At the last step, the teachers were asked to give their own views and suggestions regarding the objectives behind teaching a target culture and the assessment of students' cultural awareness via Literature. For them, it is not an easy task to do but they tried, relying on their experiences, to give some suggestions that are presented as follow:

- To have more literature classes / time.
- When teaching a foreign language, the teacher should use literary texts with a cultural context in order to assess the students' cultural awareness and not only to focus on the written and oral form of that language.
- To create an ultimate and cooperative classroom.
- Group work, debates, discussions can help too.
- Students should read so many novels or short stories that arouse their consciousness.
- To motivate the students by a reward or good marks.
- Teachers of Civilization and Culture should rely on the literary text in order to fuse them together. This means that the text will be analysed literally in Literature and culturally in Civilization to achieve an assessment in terms of quality and quantity.

3.2.2.2 Summary of the Results

The answers obtained from the interview which was addressed to Literature teachers confirm that the teaching of Literature is of a paramount importance for students. They learn about other cultures, traditions and values.

The interviewees also reveal that the assessment of students' cultural awareness is not really done. That is, in Literature, a literary text may contribute to enhance the students' cultural awareness especially if it deals with different societies and cultures such as texts concerning the Victorian Era. It is done unconsciously during the class and not in the exam. Yet, it is done through debates or group discussions but in a limited time.

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Therefore, each one of the informants has his/her main objectives to tackle in teaching Literature and also the way of analyzing the literary text. These objectives vary from one teacher to another and they are concerned with the students' cultural awareness. The focus is on the presentation of the universal code of morality, as well as the development of students' interpretive opinions. So, teachers of Literature have many specific disciplinary and cognitive goals. They want their students to grow intellectually, mature personally and to develop socially.

Although, for the assessment, they all focus on a common point which is the form and the content related to what they learned during the semester. The main objective behind the assessment is to make learning stimulating and enjoyable by increasing the involvement of the students through class discussions and making tasks more interesting

3.2.3 Classroom Observation results

Classroom observation is done with the teacher who is in charge of the module of women writers, through attending several sessions with 1st year Master students in the first semester during the period they dealt with the Victorian Era texts. The researcher uses observation check list and the results are summarized in the following table:

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N°		YES	NO
1	-The teacher is regularly present on time.	✓	
2	-The teacher appears relaxed and well prepared for class (has materials/equipment available and organized).	✓	
3	-The students are motivated.	✓	
4	-The teacher uses printed texts.	✓	
5	-The students prepare the text at home.		✓
6	-The teacher does the literary analysis	✓	
7	-The teacher speaks about those who live in different circumstances and in other historical times within the analysis.	✓	
8	-The students are aware of what they should pay attention to and what they can afford to ignore from the text.	✓	
9	-The teacher analyses the text from different cultural points of view.		✓
10	-The students are encouraged to voice their differences and give their personal opinion.	✓	
11	-The students are encouraged to answer each other's questions	✓	
12	-The teacher aims at preparing the students for their overall lives via the message of the text.		✓
13	-The teacher assesses students' cultural awareness after finishing with the text.		✓

Table 3.2. Data of Classroom Observation

From the table, it is noticeable that the results are divided into positive and negative answers. Starting with the positive ones. The teacher attendance is regular and on time. Concerning the materials and the methodology used, he/she is well

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equipped and organized. He/she uses printed texts to be analysed and discussed orally in the literary side. He/she talks about different historical times especially the Victorian Age since the students are concerned with. Therefore, the students are motivated and try to voice their personal point of views.

In contrast, there are some negative answers too. The majority of the students, if not all, do not prepare the text at home, so they can't answer each others' questions, i.e. there is no existence of group discussion. Moreover, the text analysis is commonly based on a literary analysis regarding the author, the message behind the text, social classes and the position of women in the Victorian Era (Women Writers). So, the cultural side is more or less tackled in an unconscious way. This means that the teacher when coming across a passage speaking about culture that represents something about the country so, they debate on it briefly. Additionally, the students sometimes waste time in searching for the meaning of words rather than focusing on the cultural components of the text that can prepare them for their overall lives.

At last, the assessment of students' cultural awareness is not really done either in class or in the exam. The students are aware of some cultural similarities and differences between different societies that are referred to during the class. For example the students are comparing between their culture, tradition and religion and the ones they appear in the text, i.e. the home culture and the target culture

3.2.4 Test Analysis

After the students' questionnaire, the teachers' interview and classroom observation, the researcher used the test analysis (Diagnostic test) as a complement to classroom observation in order to assess the students' cultural awareness through what they have seen during the previous lectures in women writers module. In other words, this test analysis is used to gauge the degree of students' improvement.

The test contains two topics, in which students have to choose one of them and to discuss. The first topic deals with a presentation of women in the early British Literature and how they were marginalized. The second topic is about the role of

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women in Gothic Literature. The majority of the students have chosen the second one and they have been seventy-nine (79) students. The twenty-two (22) remaining ones have dealt with the first topic. On the other hand, the grades of the students are divided into three (3) classes:

- Class 1: From 15/20 to 12/20: It is represented by twenty-four (24) students that is 24%.
- Class 2: From 11/20 to 08/20: represented by seventy-one (71) students that is 70%.
- Class 3: From 07/20 to 01/20: represented by six (06) students that is 6%.

Concerning the first class, the students representing 24% are within the topic. They have good interpretations and notions on what they do in the class either for the context or characters of the text done since they used them as examples in order to argue their answers. The only thing missing in all students' answers is to give other different cultural point of views that can create or support the intercultural understanding.

Then the second class, 70% of the students have got between 11/20 and 08/20. Their answers are less argued than those of the first class and even here there is no reference to cultural components.

The third class is represented by six (06) students (6%). It is the lower class where the students have got the grades between 07/20 and 01/20. Neither the content nor the form are acceptable for the teacher.

Therefore, the diagnostic test aims at showing the type of questions and topics the students encounter in the exams. Also, the most important points, the teacher focuses on when assessing the students, are the appropriateness of both the content and the form as well.

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3.3 Discussion of the main Results

In this part of the present study, the investigator discusses the results collected from the research instruments used. The purpose is either to confirm or disconfirm the stated hypotheses (see 2.4)

Literature, in all its different types, is of a higher importance for EFL students especially for those who are specialized in Literature & Civilization. It is beneficial in terms of the development of language skills and language cultural knowledge as well. From the aforementioned findings, it is noticed that the teaching of literature is still to a greater extent teacher-centered. The teacher selected texts that would be discussed and analysed with his/her students literally and sometimes culturally. Through these texts the students can assimilate the different cultural aspects referred to.

Moreover, the collected data paved the way to verify if the students' cultural awareness is raised and assessed via Literature. However, the findings revealed that most of the students felt motivated when they dealt with other cultures different from their native culture. That is, the literary texts support to a large degree the students' understanding and learning about a foreign culture and they act as an example to show the students the right way to take in their lives. In deed, this is what is stated in the first hypothesis. Hence, some teachers argued that there are some difficulties that they encounter in teaching literature notably the cultural barriers and the linguistic complexity with EFL learners.

In addition, the focus on the assessment of the students' cultural awareness is of a great importance in the present research work. The findings confirmed that students are assessed during the class through discussions or debates but in an unconscious way, whereas, in the exams they are not. Besides, almost all the teachers considered assessment in Literature as not an easy task because it is something subjective. That is why, the teachers' answers of the interview insist on their focus much more on the form and the content in the exams. However, the

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assessment in literature is not based on the educational values that make students socially responsible and this is what confirms the second hypothesis.

As for enhancing the students' cultural awareness, assessment would be based on different teaching/learning methods. It would target the moral and ethical thoughtfulness of students and yet it would contribute to achieve the desired cultural revival. Furthermore, the promotion of intercultural teaching allows the students to build new knowledge about the native culture and the target culture as well. It may help students to achieve a high multicultural literacy level and foster the students' acceptance of cultural differences and interest in the target culture. Therefore, the third hypothesis is confirmed.

Thus, what is already mentioned leads us to confirm two hypotheses and to reject the second one. The results have validated that the students gain benefit in learning literature because it helps them to develop their language awareness and their understanding of many aspects of the target culture. Indeed, teachers should be aiming to engage or extend their students' interest in the subject and to conduct them in a way that they are encouraged to think critically and independently about what they study.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the data collected from the research instruments used in this study, notably, the students' questionnaire, the teachers' interview and the classroom observation followed by a test analysis. Yet, it is concerned with the experimental basis for the theory.

First of all, it dealt with the aim of the research which is to know if the students are assessed in the cultural side and how via Literature, and this was according to students' and teachers' points of views. It is noticeable that, through the findings, the students are aware of the different cultures they dealt with in literary texts, but the only thing missing is the assessment of this cultural awareness. At the second phase, the investigator has analysed and discussed all the main findings gathered via the research tools.

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Ultimately, some suggestions and recommendations have to be provided for the sake of improving the learning objectives and assessment of the students' cultural awareness that engage them in critical thinking and reflection. Also, to gain experience, confidence and insights to do things differently. This is what is going to intend in the next chapter.

Chapter Four

Suggestions and Recommendations

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Chapter Four

Suggestions and Recommendations

4.1 Introduction

The results obtained from the previous chapter on the assessment of students' cultural awareness through literature were at a certain level negative. This means that there is no a real assessment of culture within the class or in the exams for EFL students. Besides, the term cultural awareness has been selected as one of the goals in the present research work in order to shed light on how to teach and much more on how to assess the cultural side in literature for EFL classes.

Within this context, the researcher will attempt to provide some suggestions and recommendations that may pave the way for a better integration of different methods of assessment in literature including the students' cultural awareness. The researcher, also, tries to recommend a reform based on some practical suggestions to reinforce the teaching of culture via literary texts as well as the assessment methods regarding the content, teaching materials and teaching methodologies.

4.2 Sociocultural Aspects of Literature

Literature is the sum total of achievements of man in the field of letters, recorded and documented over the centuries of human existence. It is the door through which the faculty of imagination enters the realm of an entirely new world to portrait people's ideas and dreams. It both depicts and inspires social changes. According to Hanauer (2001) "*literature is a valuable source of cultural knowledge precisely because it presents a personal interpretation of life and values as the literary work experiences them*" (p, 396).

Therefore, works of literature present a selected section of society at a certain time and space. These works are generally composed of individuals who

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incorporate a variation sets of values, ethics, believes and experience. Although, the role of the teacher should insist on the selection of texts that show different viewpoints and cultures. In this respect, Wasikiewicz states:

The role of the language teacher would consist in providing a selection of texts showing a variety of individual perspectives and making language learner aware that each individual voice is just a single element of a complex mosaic that each culture is built of.

Wasikiewicz (2012, p.4)

Accordingly, the teacher should lead the learners to understand deeply the meaning of culture reflected by a given society, as well as to grasp the different aspects of the target culture. It should be done through the selection of literary texts that would be used for critical discussion leading to enhance the students' cultural aspects from different individual perspectives.

4.3 Literary Interaction in Cultural Education

A number of scholars including Kramersch (2003), Bredella (2000) and Soter (1997) have observed the important role of literature in developing the students' cultural awareness through the use of several practical ways. Yet, the literary texts are often seen as a source of information about culture, history and society in the target language and culture.

4.3.1 Selection of Literary Texts

In order to interact efficiently in intercultural situations, teachers can use efficient tools, such as authentic texts. Luisa M. Gonzalez Rodriguez & Miriam Borham Puyal (2012) state that: *“the use of literary texts can promote reflection on cultural differences, develop understanding of the home culture and open attitudes towards other cultures”*. In this respect, literary texts are authentic materials that may provide students with ample information about the values and

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norms of the target language culture. These materials also help students to improve their language skills especially in terms of listening and understanding the written texts.

Moreover, the most important task to do before selecting and dealing with a text is to seek for the one which stimulates a range of questions, reflection and criticism. Also, the teacher might think about some factors when he/she chooses a piece of literature for the students, and for this case Clandfield (2003) posits the following questions in order to select the appropriate text:

- Does the teacher understand enough about the text to feel comfortable using it?
- Is there enough time to work on the text in class?
- Does it fit with the rest of the syllabus?
- Is it something that could be relevant to the learners?
- Will it be motivating for them?
- How much cultural or literary background do the learners need to be able to deal with the tasks?
- Is the level of language in the text too difficult

In other words, the literary text should be the one that creates a favourable environment for cognitive and affective development of language learners. Likewise Fenner (2001) posits that ***“it is advisable to think of the kind of cultural problems students might have when reading the text and help them to overcome these problems”***. Additionally, Fenner (2001) suggested some solutions to the previous cited problems that focus on:

- Personalising and getting students involved with literary text by making it relevant to their experience.
- To reach the cultural information by providing students with multiple choice questions.
- To enable students to take notes concerning the brief cultural information and explanations provided by the teacher during the class.

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- To achieve the cultural comparisons by getting students to brainstorm ideas about their own society and culture compared with those in the selected text.
- To open a debate or discussion emphasizing on the particular cultural aspects of the text.
- Extension activities as role play, group discussion and project work.

The use of these activities and tasks are positively evaluated by the learners and the teachers too. They make the teacher enjoy the students' lively and active participation during the class. As well, these activities can modify the way the students think and broaden their thinking horizon.

4.3.2 The Role Play Assessment

In an attempt to fulfill the identified needs and to be innovative in assessment practice, the researchers resorted to using a combination of formative assessment and authentic assessment task in a form of role play. Riera et al. (2010) posit that *“role-playing prepares students to face real situations by giving them the skills to identify the best way to deal with situation of each individual, family or community depending on the context and culture”*.

Role play as a strategy offers several advantages for teachers and students. Poorman (2002) has shown that *“experiential learning activities in the classroom lead understanding of the course content and increased involvement”*. Moreover, Glass (1995) found that *“role play allowed students to discover insights about themselves and others, and also to express strong opinions”*. Teachers should try to create appropriate activities using role playing in order to demonstrate the differences between the students' culture and the target one in similar situations, so that they will be aware about the good and bad behaviours and manners. However, the role play requires a good presentation and management from both students and teachers. During role play the teacher observes and after having finished the presentation, the teacher first takes comments and then asks other participants to comment. For this sake, Sajjad (2009) posits that *“the teacher should summarize, drawing out learning points, leaving participants with positive comments and*

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feelings”. As a result, the learners felt that role play gave them opportunity to be creators of knowledge.

Although, not all students would want to be actively involved and some may, in fact, feel intimidated. So, this is what can lead them to fear, and anxiety. Therefore, when using this assessment technique, the teacher must bear in mind that it can attribute anxiety, shyness and interdependence that can be as a barrier to effective assessment.

4.3.3 Assessment Through Literature Circles

In an attempt to assess the students’ cultural awareness, literature circles are an ideal reading instructional method in holding students accountable for their own understanding of literature. Students in this technological age should learn about texts in ways that are meaningful to them. Yet, literature circles involve a small group of students exploring a piece of literature in depth. Accordingly Daniels’ (1994) definition of literature circles is perhaps the most thorough. To him, *“literature circles are small, temporary discussion groups who have chosen to read the same book”*. According to Daniels (1994), literature circles actually consist of 12 key ingredients:

- 1) Students choose their own reading materials.
- 2) Students form small, temporary groups based on book choices.
- 3) Groups read different books.
- 4) Student groups meet on a regular, predictable schedule to discuss reading.
- 5) Written and drawn notes are used to guide students’ reading and discussion.
- 6) Students generate discussion topics.
- 7) Group meetings are open, natural conversation about books, so personal comments are welcome.
- 8) Discussion roles are rotated.

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- 9) The teacher is a facilitator, not a group member or an instructor.
- 10) Evaluation is conducted by teacher observation and student evaluation.
- 11) Playfulness and fun are maintained in the classroom.
- 12) Upon finishing books, readers share with others, and new groups form around new reading choices.

In literature circles, students are actively engaged in reading which encourages them to negotiate and share their ideas about the text to come up with a common meaning. This strategy is a learner-centered approach that focuses on students' enthusiastic, natural and informal discussion. This may create a supportive and relaxing classroom atmosphere and allow students to enhance their communicative skills. Literature circles, as well, incorporate collaborative learning, motivation and an increase in responsibility.

Moreover, other advantages of literature circles are suggested by some scholars as creating opportunities for students to read digitally through the use of e-book. In the same vein, Cavanaugh (2006) asserts:

Using e-books in the classroom is an excellent application of technology. Whether accessed on a handheld, laptop, desktop, graphing calculator, cell phone, or even an MP3 player, electronic books are the reality of our lives, as we as parents, teachers, and school administrators should start maximizing their potential.

Cavanaugh (2006, p.4)

Creating relevant learning opportunities in the classroom allow students to become more familiar and comfortable with new technologies, as well as, offer an authentic opportunity to students to develop new literacy skills that are necessary in this information age.

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Summing up, one might argue that there are many tools that can be used to assess the students' performance and cultural awareness in literature. So our suggestion is that group discussion is of great importance in assessing first the discussion skills of the students, and also the techniques used to strengthen them. Figure 4.1 below shows a list of focus questions used for the assessment.

- 1- Is the student prepared for the literature discussion ?
- 2- Does the student use the text to share passages? To support ideas and opinions? How effectively?
- 3- Does the student listen actively to others?
- 4- Does the student ask questions? What kinds?
- 5- Do the questions get a thoughtful response? Which are most effective?
- 6- Does the student contribute thoughtful ideas?
- 7- Does the student make predictions? How effectively?
- 8- Does the student build on other people's comments?
- 9- Does the student keep the group on task?
- 10- Does the student discuss unknown and interesting words?
- 11- Does the student make personal connections to his/her life? At what levels?
- 12- Does the student make connections to other experiences and cultures?
- 13- Does the student discuss the author's craft and word choice?
- 14- Does the student discuss cultural elements (traditions, customs, religion)?
- 15- Can the student set goals?

Figure 4.1 List of focus questions in literature discussions (Bonnie Campbell Hill, Katherine L. Schlick Noe, and Nancy J. Johnson, 2000).

4.4 Pedagogical Recommendations

To be valuable, assessment must provide teachers, students, and parents with information that help to improve the quality of education outcomes for students. Assessment then is more than simply taking tests or collecting and analysing data, but implies a necessary judgement in what knowledge is valued through decisions

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about what is assessed and how this assessment is carried out. Similarly, changes to assessment policy alone is insufficient. Alton-Lee (2003) alludes to this problem in her *Best Evidence Synthesis* on quality teaching for diverse students: *“assessment effectiveness is embedded within and dependent upon pedagogical context – assessment and feedback alone do not achieve the effect”* (p. 86).

4.4.1 Comparison Activities

As a suggestion, a foreign language curriculum should contain a comparison exercises in order to treat the new information in reference to the learner’s own culture and knowledge. It should also emphasise on the different themes that should be approached in a way which provides students with opportunities to compare their own culture to the target culture (LOPS 2003). According to LOPS (2003:101), *“special attention ought to be paid to the differences between L1 and L2 and to the cultural factors that explain these differences”*. Therefore, the ideal case for teachers would be to create a classroom atmosphere in which questions and discussions about the target culture, comparisons between students’ native culture and the target culture will reinforce the students’ language learning.

4.4.2 Analysis and Interpretation

Literature analysis differs from other types of writing. However, the focus in this latter is not on offering your opinion about the work; but, the focus is on interpreting and analyzing the text. Certainly, you offer your informed opinion of the text’s interpretation, but you do not assess the merits of the text or tell readers whether or not you liked the work. In the same vein McGee (2001) states that:

“In order to write well about literature, you must be able to read the text closely, looking at its structure, the words the author has chosen, the characters’ motivations, the patterns of language, cultural and literary devices”.

McGee (2001, p.2)

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Likewise, being able to write about literature demonstrates your ability to read critically and engage in the higher level thinking skills of analysis and interpretation. Though, it is important to keep in mind that readers are integral to make meaning with literary texts. Readers complete the writer's work by bringing their own life experiences and ideas to it to make meaning. Also, they need to be trained to analyse and evaluate cultural concepts and values to develop their critical ability.

4.4.3 Opinion Gap Task

Opinion-gap task as proposed by Nunan (2004) is an activity which *“involves identifying and articulating a personal preference, feeling, or attitude in response to a given situation”*. One of the most important things about this task is that it promotes learners' confidence by providing them with plenty of opportunities to use and propose their ideas and information in the classroom without being constantly afraid. So, students talk about their opinions and preferences while at the same time want to convince their partners. Since students have different opinions, the outcome of the task will be always open and questions are raised even if the text does not refer to culture. Hence, students could develop their own interpretations and viewpoints.

Therefore, teachers should free their students from time to time from the unit theme and engage them in a cultural notion for discussion and debate in order to correct some generalizations and stereotypes. As well, to provide original cultural facts and illustrate real life events.

4.5 Literature and Culture in Muslim Societies

As religion is one of the main pillars of culture, religious issues should not be avoided when teaching literature. Artran and Norenzayan (2004) state that *“it is healthy to urge learners to make research on religion and to consider that the religious differences are part of universal differences to relief the psychological distance that foreign learners develop toward religious differences”*.

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Besides, Islamic scholars believe that Muslims are encouraged to maintain their religious and cultural distinctiveness and to not blindly and randomly imitate the fashions, practices, and behavior of other religious or ideological communities. Importantly, these religious precepts do not oppose students to exchange cultural ideas with non-Muslims but rather advise them to maintain good relations with, and to learn from people of other faith communities.

In fact, Islam does not restrict the sources of knowledge, so learners can seek valid, meaningful, and useful knowledge from wherever they wish. Since English literature is one important source of learning, approaching it to increase one's knowledge is both permissible and recommended but teachers and learners should, obviously, discriminate between useful and harmful elements when studying and teaching the subject to protect themselves from untoward cultural influences.

In reality, learners can benefit by studying these texts and thereby enrich their knowledge of western culture and civilization. This will eventually facilitate a deeper understanding between Islam and the West. The Qur'an encourages such cultural bridge-building and exchanges, as it appreciates cultural diversity.

Therefore, dominant ideas expressed in English literary pieces can be assessed according to the Islamic worldview. So, in order to undertake the intellectual project of Islamizing English literature, scholars should work at two levels: that of thought and that of knowledge. In other words, they should first of all believe in the comprehensiveness of Islamic teachings and their potential applicability in all aspects of life, and then acquire a reasonable understanding of Islam so that they can relate the issues discussed in literary pieces to it.

4.6 Teachers' Training

Language assessment allows teachers to gather information about student learning and adjust their instructional practices accordingly. Yet, assessment can support student-centered teaching by helping teachers understand what students have learned or are able to do and what they still need to know (Shepard, 2000). Additionally, Malone (2008) asserts that *“assessment practices typically require some degree of technical knowledge or training in order to implement, but*

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language teachers often receive limited pre-service training in assessment and testing”.

Thus, to improve the teaching/learning process, classroom assessment can be a valuable source of information for teachers and students. The realization of this type of dynamic, continual assessment will depend on providing teachers with the knowledge and resources to integrate assessments into the learning process.

Based on the research findings, the study suggests that an institutional support is needed to foster alternative assessment approaches for EFL students. In addition, another factor that will increase the assessment of students' cultural awareness and support authentic assessments approaches could yield by embedding cultural awareness assessment as a subject in the curriculum of education faculties. Furthermore, to increase the knowledge of classroom assessment within higher education institutions, short-term course, workshops and seminars might be conducted and supported.

4.7 The Role of the Teacher in Assessment

Foreign language teachers are among the most important mediators. They have to experience and understand the foreign culture. Moreover, they have to make a comparison and discuss with their students either similarities or differences existing between their home culture and the target one and it is considered as an important step for them. This would challenge and modify the students' perspective on the world and their cultural identity as members of a given society. In fact, the role of the teachers is to face implications and provide them with the practical and theoretical support (Byram et al, 1994).

Foreign language teachers can also enhance students' cultural awareness by using authentic materials that enable the students to discover more and to do better analysis by themselves. In the same vein, Kramsh (1993) thinks that the teachers' responsibility is not restricted to tell the students what to say, or have to be appropriate in different situations. Rather, it is their task to give the students space

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to make their own meanings, and help them to realize the cultural implications of those meanings in a way that stimulates critical thinking.

Teachers to a large extent have a syllabus such as textbooks used in teaching. However, it is noticeable that teachers are offered the selection of their teaching materials especially when textbooks do not meet their expectations. Thus, the role of teachers is crucial in presenting the target culture to their students (Sercu & Bandura, 2005). Besides, foreign language teachers should have the ability to experience and analyze both the home and the target culture.

Therefore, teachers could use assessment methods that evaluate student performance for work done in class through quizzes or tests and out of class such as take-home tests, assignments, or projects. Timed classroom-based tests may be one student's meat, but another's poison. Evaluating student achievement by methods other than just tests provides more opportunity and greater equity for students who are not strong test takers. One strategy that teachers could use to intentionally diversify assessment is to conceptualize student evaluation methods in terms of the following categories and to be sure that they're using at least one assessment method per category:

- a. Product assessments: written essays, stories, research reports or projects.
- b. Performance assessments: tests, oral presentations, debates, science demonstrations, artistic expression.
- c. Process-focused assessments such as oral questioning, interviews, journaling, portfolio development (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009).

4.8 From Literary Text to Film Adaptation

Students often find the visual nature of film more accessible than works in print. When film adaptation and literary text are used together in the classroom, students can overcome the linguistic and cultural difficulties and achieve a better comprehension of the literary work.

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While students read a novel, they imagine the characters, setting, and action taking place. After that, with a complementary film adaptation students can write short paragraphs about the film. Once they have evaluated the adaptations, the students will be able to compare between the vision created from the book and the one of the film.

Furthermore, cultural adaptation is advantageous for the EFL students. It is also called by some scholars “Nativization” and it is used to cope with students’ cultural barriers found in the literary text. Yet, it is an essential parameter used to assess the students’ cultural background knowledge. This latter, and according to Jalilifar and Assi (2008), it enables students to *“relate the characters, setting and the events in the story to their own life experience, and this in turn will improve their comprehension of the stories”*. (p. 73)

In addition to this, the students are encouraged to look for the cultural aspects of the film and give also their opinions, thoughts and feelings about it. They can, as well, compare between the aspects of the home culture and those of the target culture because it will have relevance to their lives. This is, in fact, another way to assess the students’ cultural awareness and to make them more critical viewers since our culture has quickly gone from text-based to visually-based.

4.9 Activities for Assessing the Students’ Cultural Awareness

The purpose of assessing the students’ cultural awareness is to stimulate their thinking about cultural competence and help them to reflect on their experience, knowledge and attitudes regarding culturally diverse populations, since knowledge is acquired from and applied to multiple settings and cultural contexts. However, some questions have been adapted from the ORELТ (Open Resources for English Language Teaching) portal which support the classroom activities for the assessment and they are as follow:

- Do the activities in this unit motivate your students to draw inferences from their own lives?

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- Do you encourage them to read and appreciate the literary texts as reflections of events in real life?
- Do you manage to make them aware of the ways in which literature connects us to our life experiences?

In the same vein, the following activities proposed from the novel written by *Elizabeth Gaskell* entitled *North and South*, have been suggested for the assessment of students' cultural awareness based on Bloom's Taxonomy (see; figure 1-3) in order to put it into practice and also to make students think critically about the literary work and its cultural components.

Activity 1: knowledge level

- Search about *Elizabeth Gaskell*, the author of the novel *North and South* you have already read and write three new facts you learn about her.

Activity 2: Comprehension Level

- What are the main characters and their roles in the novel?
- Write the main events in the novel.
- Write one page summary of the novel.

Activity 3: Application Level

- -Find an event in the novel and relate this event to an actual event in your life.
- Write one general statement that you infer from the novel regarding real life.
- Suppose that the author of the novel you read claims that her novel includes information that can guide and help you in real life. What information would you look for and to whom you consult to believe the author. Explain your answer.

Activity 4: Analysis and Synthesis Levels

- Give some examples from the facts and opinions in the novel that show the advantages and disadvantages of class conflict.

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- Write a new ending for the novel.

Activity 5: Evaluation Level:

- Would you want to be a character in this novel? Explain Why? Why not?
- Judge the actions of one character in the novel? Is she or he behaves in the right way? Or she /he should have acted in a different way. Support your view. Why? Why not?

4.10 Further Suggestions and Recommendations

There are several extension activities that teachers could choose to develop and assess their students' cultural awareness at the end of the lesson or in the exam. This would depend on availability of resources, time and students' ability. Although, teachers should opt for texts that hopefully meet the students' interests and develop their cultural knowledge as well.

4.10.1 A Recommended Teacher's Knowledge of Cultural Assessment.

According to researchers in the field of foreign language education, there is a need for more discussion regarding the incorporation of cultural knowledge and its assessment in foreign language curriculum. Additionally, teachers should follow some principles that develop their cultural knowledge and enable them to assess their students' cultural awareness without difficulties. As mentioned by Benmoussat (2003, p: 265) the principles are as follow:

- Teachers would have and seek knowledge about their own country and community.
- Teachers would have and seek knowledge about the socio-cultural environment of the target language communities or countries.
- Teachers' knowledge would be active knowledge ready to establish associations between the main stream and target cultures.
- Teachers would have and seek knowledge about the variables affecting the acceptability of social behavior.

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- Teachers would have or seek knowledge about taboo topics, expletives and swear words of the target communities.

In deed, it is hoped that these principles will contribute to a greater interest in the knowledge and skill levels of teachers in measurement and assessment. So, how best to prepare teachers for a life of assessment in the classroom.

4.10.2 Towards Critical Cultural Awareness

The notion of critical cultural awareness within literature encourages teachers to craft learning opportunities that guide learners in observing clear connections between classroom lessons and real-world issues and thus preparing them for the exams. Byram (1997) posits that “*students who are given the chance to explore CCA in the language classroom attain proficiency in the skill of evaluation*”. Once, students move toward the process of CCA, they will: (adapted from Nugent & Catalano 2015)

- See things from different perspectives;
- Examine the origins and implications of worldviews, values, beliefs, and attitudes;
- Analyse the construction of knowledge, cultures, identities, and relationships;
- Make connections between global and local contexts; ask questions about the world, themselves, and others; and
- Question what is presented as universally true.

The above characteristics will be achieved when the assessment of students’ cultural awareness is supported and done in a conscious manner by providing arguments and evidence. Here are some questions to students that we suggest for the assessment of their cultural awareness after presenting a literary text to them (adapted from Centre of Teaching Excellence, 2007):

- What information is most important in the text?
- What might be left out?

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- What do you think about the characters of the text? Give your opinion? Justify?
- What are your assumptions? Are they valid?
- Give examples of facts and opinions in order to convince others of what you think?
- What are the similarities and differences of the cultural aspects that are noticed in the text comparing with your real life situation?
- Try to personalise the text by talking about anything similar has happened to you?

4.10.3 Effective Methodology for Assessment

Preparing students for the literary and cultural questions will require a similar focus on the familiarity with the way the texts reflect attitudes, values and beliefs of their own time. Students do not necessitate a large amount of contextual information beyond that needed to understand the text. First and foremost, students, in the exams, will be required to respond to the ideas in the text, with their ideas being underpinned by an awareness of relevant background. They will also be expected to be familiar with key elements of the text in characterisation, structure and use of language. Questions will be also based on social and cultural aspects. In order to enhance students' cultural awareness.

However, it is important to establish clear criteria for evaluating cultural awareness and identifying the goal toward which, both teachers and students, are working, as stated by Chambers & Gregory (2006): *“it is equally obvious that there is indeed a strong relationship between what will be assessed and what students pay greatest attention to and give most time to as they study”* (p,162). On the other hand, the following points are the characteristics for an assessment that concerns the students' cultural awareness: (adapted from the Centre for Teaching Excellence, 2007)

- Accurately and thoroughly interprets evidence, statements, questions, literary and cultural elements.
- Asks relevant questions

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- Asks for the analysis and evaluation of key information and alternative points of view clearly and precisely.
- Examination of beliefs, assumptions, and opinions and then, weighs them against facts.
- Draws insightful and reasonable conclusions.
- Asks to justify inferences and opinions.
- Evaluates major alternative points of view.
- Explains assumptions and reasons.

As a result, assessment is a useful tool that should be used during the lecture and not just at the end of the semester since it offers feedback for both teachers and students. The following table gives us a summary about the usefulness of assessing the students' cultural awareness:

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Scans Fundamental Skills	Blooms' Taxonomy	Multiple Intelligences	Equipped For the Future (EFF) Standards
- Basic skills	- Knowledge	- Verbal / Linguistic	The lesson of Cultural Awareness uses 10 EFF Standards
- Thinking skills	- Comprehension	- Interpersonal	➤ Resolve conflict and negotiate
- Personal qualities	- Application	- Intrapersonal	➤ Observe critically
	- Analysis	- Visual	➤ Listen actively
	- Synthesis		➤ Cooperate with others
	- Evaluation		➤ Solve problems & make decisions
			➤ Take responsibility for learning
			➤ Reflect & Evaluate
			➤ Read with understanding
			➤ Advocate & influence
			➤ Guide others

Table 4-1 Summary of the lesson of cultural awareness and its benefit for the students (adapted from Marc McCulloch and Troy Behrens for ASCL Educational Services (2005))

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4.10.4 Enhancing the Reading Skills and Strategies

Students seemed to lack knowledge of the context or culture within which the text had been framed. The lack of understanding of the literary text mainly its historical context, cultural practices, social conventions may constrain students' ability to read, interpret and comprehend the literature being studied.

Therefore, it seems obvious that the best way to engage students with literature is to read using the skimming strategy to get the general idea of the selected text. Bachman and Cohen (1998, p.102) indicate that *“skimming allows readers to read for general understanding and this could be complemented by providing incremental evaluation activities”*.

Other factors that facilitate the process of assessment in literature are to involve students in larger groups and general class discussions and debates known as literature circles (see: 4.3.3). Also, students should come to class adequately prepared and having read the text that would be discussed, in order to see themselves as being accountable for their own progress and success. Besides students should be provided with initial readings that explain specific context (e.g. culture, historical period, values or religion) of the literary work.

On the other hand, the reading skills bring essential merits for the students. They stimulate a range of questions that can be a part of text at many points, reflection, criticism and confrontation with otherness, creating a favourable environment for cognitive and affective development of language learners (adapted from Kramsch, 2000). So, as mentioned before, the teacher can use some generic question stems to quiz the students and following are examples of the questions that can be used to assess the students' cultural awareness depending on the context of the literary work (adapted from the Centre for Teaching Excellence, 2007) :

- Explain why....
- Explain how....
- How does...affect...?

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- What is the meaning of...?
- Why is ...important?
- What is the difference between ... and...?
- Compare ... and ... with regard to ...?
- How are ... and ... similar / different?
- What is the solution to the problem of ...?
- Do you agree or disagree with this statement? What evidence is there to support your answer?
- What is another way to look at ...?

4.10.5 The Use of Questionnaires and Interviews in Assessment

The use of questionnaires and interviews in assessment is seen as an exploratory step to determine the students' thoughts, experiences and perceptions as well as to get a clear idea about their social and cultural background. So, questionnaires and interviews may allow the students to describe what is meaningful and important for them using their own words, and this is what makes them more relaxed. Other important points when using questionnaires and interviews are that they provide high credibility and allow teachers to probe for more details. On the other hand, students have the flexibility to use their knowledge and experiences to explore interesting and unexpected ideas or themes in order to enhance their level of knowledge linguistically and culturally.

Therefore, at the end of the lecture the teachers can make use of the questionnaire or the interview in order to gather data about students' experiences, interests, thoughts, beliefs and understandings. Also, they need to relate the subject matter to the real life situation and backgrounds of the students. Truly, by using such tools, assessment can be a force for knowing our students and creating a classroom that can meet their needs (Zoltan Dornyei, 2001)

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4.11 Conclusion

In this chapter the researcher has attempted to provide some useful suggestions and recommendations about the assessment of the students' cultural awareness through literature for both teachers and learners. Yet, we are highly persuaded that by practicing the suggested activities and following the recommended methodologies that deal with assessment, teachers will have feedback about students' progress, also, students will increase their cultural awareness. Therefore, assessment of the students' cultural awareness builds self-confidence and self-esteem and enhances learning.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The present research work has been an attempt to investigate the assessment of students' consciousness in literature centralizing more on the cultural aspects of the literary work. It has first examined the way literature courses are run and assessed in EFL classrooms. Then, it has shown the efficiency of literary texts in raising learners' awareness about other cultures different from their own.

Regarding the importance of literature in increasing the cultural awareness, teachers try to select some appropriate teaching materials for their students, such as culturally familiar texts, in order to make the lecture safe and enjoyable. As a result, students are more motivated and will develop their linguistic and cultural competencies. Therefore, for an efficient assessment of students' cultural awareness, this kind of texts are more useful to explore the students' real life experiences.

Moreover, this study has investigated the methods used for cultural assessment in the module of women writers, with first year Masters students, Department of English, University Abou Bekr Belkaid of Tlemcen. Although, it has been noticed that language teachers do not assess their students directly on their cultural understanding of the text, but they do it in an unconscious way. This means that students are sometimes asked to link their cultural background to the literary text they deal with in the classroom, or to do the comparison between the target culture and the home culture to pick out the similarities and the differences. Also, the form and the content are the common points that the majority of teachers focus on when evaluating their students. Similarly, it is clear that the primary focus in teaching literature is the analysis of the historical, social and political aspects of the literary text, this is why the cultural side is neglected in assessment. Yet, even the questions asked to students in the exam are concerned with the literary analysis rather than with the cultural one, so, they have to answer according to the proposed questions.

In spite of the lack of assessment of the cultural awareness in EFL classes, the researcher has shown a positive attitude towards doing it since it is the way for students to get insight into the various aspects of the target culture and to enhance their motivation to read more and to develop their intercultural skills. Throughout this research work, there was a major focus on the different ways of analysing and assessing a literary work. The results of such a process were used in order to suggest some strategies and activities to assess and enhance the students' cultural awareness.

Chapter one tried to carry out the main definitions and notions related to the teaching of literature and culture, as well as the different views of some researchers and scholars about the assessment of cultural awareness through literature in EFL classrooms. Besides, it presented the difficulties that both teachers and students faced when dealing with the process of assessment in the cultural side. Also, it included the major principles of literature teaching that help students in raising their cultural consciousness and suit the methods of assessment.

The second chapter was an empirical phase of the research that presented the methodological framework. It aimed at providing a clear description of the research method, research instruments and the sample population, used to collect qualitative and quantitative data about the way assessment is presented in literature. These information are analysed and discussed in the third chapter.

The third chapter consisted of the data analyses and interpretations gathered from the research instruments which are the classroom observation, the students' questionnaire, the teachers' interview and the test analysis. In deed, from the discussions, the researcher obtained some results that confirmed the lack of assessment of the cultural awareness and that teachers gave much more importance to language and content rather than to cultural aspects when dealing with the literary analysis of the text. Also, it has been revealed, in this chapter, that both teachers and students face some problems in literature sessions especially when the text is extremely different from their home culture. Yet, the majority of the students do not

care about the pros and cons of assessing their cultural awareness, their major goal is to get a good grade in the exams.

The fourth chapter seeks to make proposals for improving the teaching of culture in relation with literature and the process of assessment as well. Some recommendations were presented concerning the selection of the literary texts, the teaching materials and the methodologies. On the other hand, some sample activities, to be addressed to the students, were suggested in order to enhance and assess the students' cultural consciousness.

To conclude with, the present research has attempted to provide a clear idea of the importance of assessment in literature mainly when the focus is on the students' cultural awareness. As a result, the teaching of literature is so related to the teaching of culture that it plays a major role in raising the students' cultural consciousness. That is why, teachers may design the syllabus according to their students' preferences and needs. Moreover, they need to select some texts that are full of cultural knowledge and also, to introduce texts that are updated in order to make students doing the comparison between different cultures and to overcome the linguistic and cultural differences.

Therefore, assessment may be easier and more encouraged after a working session of reading comprehension that is followed by debates based on the cultural aspects of the home culture and the target one. Taboo subjects have to be treated too, since they are the means of enhancing cultural awareness and helping students to cope with real life experiences. In the same vein, a critical look at literary texts from an Islamic perspective is needed because Islam is deemed to be a religion that pervades all aspects of human life. In fact, assessing students in the light of Islamic views is an important intellectual challenge for both teachers and students. This technique allows them to benefit from what is good in the literary text and protect them from what is morally and culturally harmful and contrary to their religious values. At last, as far as the quality teaching is concerned, an accurate appraisal of the assessment in literature is required in order to support and develop both the teaching and learning processes because of the increased international competitions and the introduction of new

information technologies. As well as to link both literature and civilization curricula to assess the students' cultural awareness in order to create better intercultural understanding and this will be my future research.

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Appendix -A-
Students' Questionnaire

Students' Questionnaire

The following questionnaire aims at getting information about the assessment of learners' cultural awareness in literature through novels of some women writers. So please, you are kindly requested to answer the following questions.

Age:

Gender:

1- How long have you been studying English? Numbers of years.....

2- Do you like the module of literary studies?

Yes

No

Neutral

-Why?

.....
.....

3- Do you appreciate?

-British literature

-American literature

-African literature

4- Do you think that teaching literature is an important process?

-To learn about the English language

-To learn about the target culture

-Other.....

5- On what points does the teacher focus while working on a literary text?

-The author

-The text

-The language

-The target culture

6- Does literature raise the learners' interest about foreign cultures? How?

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

7- Do you find difficulties when dealing with other cultures in a literary text?

Yes

No

-If yes, what are these difficulties?

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

8- Do teachers control the learners' attitudes and motivation in developing cultural awareness?

-Before the lecture

-After the lecture

-Before and after the lecture

9- How many eras/periods have you dealt with in the module of women writers?

Could you list them?

.....
.....

.....
.....

10-Do you think that your cultural awareness is influenced by the great advances made by the Victorians? How?

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

11-If we take the Frankenstein text (chapter 23) by Mary Shelley, could you give me the main purpose behind this passage?

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

12-What are the main cultural points acquired from the studied Victorian texts?

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

13-In exams, do you link the cultural aspects of our society to those of the writers?

Yes

No

If yes, how?

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

14-Is your cultural understanding assessed by your teacher?

Yes

No

-If yes how?

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

15-Do you think that testing cultural awareness via literary text is?

Easy

Intermediate

Difficult

16-Can you suggest some personal point of view regarding ways of assessing students' cultural awareness through a literary text?

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

Thank you for your collaboration

Appendix -B-
Teachers' Interview

Teachers' Interview

The purpose of this interview is to collect data about the assessment of learners' cultural awareness in Literature through novels of some women writers. I would be grateful if you could answer the following questions

1. What is the module you are specialized in?
2. How long have you been teaching Literature at the Department of English?
3. In teaching Literature, what are the main objectives you target?
4. Do you select your literary texts or are they designed in the syllabus?
5. What are the main cultural aspects you focus on?
6. Do you think that the students can make differences between the different cultures they deal with via the literary texts?
7. How do you assess the students' cultural awareness in your module?
8. According to you, to what extent the literary text in the module of Women Writers may contribute to raising the students' cultural awareness?
9. What is your end goal for the students in teaching the Victorian Era?
10. What are the strategies you generally use to teach a target culture?
11. What are the difficulties you encounter when teaching different cultures?
12. Do you agree with the fact that students are assessed in terms of quantity and not in terms of quality in the cultural side?
13. What are the important points you focus on when testing your students' understanding in exams?
14. Relying on your experience, could you add some suggestions regarding the objectives behind teaching a target culture through Literature, and on the way students' cultural awareness is assessed?

Thank you for your cooperation

Appendix -C-
Classroom Observation

Classroom observation checklist

N°	Check list
1	-The teacher is regularly present on time.
2	-The teacher appears relaxed and well prepared for class (has materials/equipment available and organized).
3	-The students are motivated.
4	-The teacher uses printed texts.
5	-The students prepare the text at home.
6	-The teacher does the literary analysis
7	-The teacher speaks about those who live in different circumstances and in other historical times within the analysis.
8	-The students are aware of what they should pay attention to and what they can afford to ignore from the text.
9	-The teacher analyses the text from different cultural points of view.
10	-The students are encouraged to voice their differences and give their personal opinion.
11	-The students are encouraged to answer each other's questions
12	-The teacher aims at preparing the students for their overall lives via the message of the text.
13	-The teacher assesses students' cultural awareness after finishing with the text.

ملخص:

الهدف من هذه الدراسة هو تقييم الوعي الثقافي لدى الطلاب في درس الأدب، تهدف أيضا إلى استخلاص واظهار مواقف المدرسين تجاه الأدوات البيداغوجية المستعملة في تقييم الطلبة، أظهرت نتائج البحث أن الجانب الثقافي لا يؤخذ بعين الاعتبار عند تقييم الطلاب من الجانب الآخر النتائج تدل على أن المدرسين يركزون عند التقييم على اللغة والمحتوى بدلا من التركيز على المكونات الثقافية للنص، بالإضافة على ذلك فقد كشفت هذه الدراسة أن تقييم الوعي الثقافي لدى الطلاب يحضرهم على المسؤولية الاجتماعية والثقافية بالإضافة إلى تشجيعهم على تحسين طرق التعلم والتفكير النقدي والمستقل.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الأدب، الثقافة، التقييم، الوعي الثقافي.

Résumé:

Le but de cette étude est d'examiner l'évaluation de la conscience culturelle des étudiants en littérature, l'étude tente de déceler les attitudes des enseignants de la littérature envers les outils pédagogiques utilisés dans l'évaluation des étudiants. Les résultats de cette recherche indiquent que les étudiants ne sont pas évalués sur le côté culturel dans la littérature et que les enseignants se concentrent davantage sur la langue et le contenu, plutôt que sur les composantes culturelles du texte. En outre, la recherche a révélé que l'évaluation de la conscience culturelle des étudiants les prépare à être socialement et culturellement responsables. Aussi, les encourager à améliorer leur apprentissage et à penser de façon critique et indépendante.

Mots-clés: littérature, culture, évaluation, conscience culturelle.

Summary:

The aim of this study is to investigate the assessment of students' cultural awareness in literature. It attempts to elicit the literature teachers' attitudes towards the pedagogical tools used in assessment. The results of this research indicate that students are not assessed on the cultural side in literature and that teachers focus more on the language and content rather than on the cultural components of the text. Besides, the research has revealed that the assessment of students' cultural awareness prepares them to be socially and culturally responsible. Also, it encourages them to improve their learning and to think critically and independently.

Keywords: literature, culture, assessment, cultural awareness

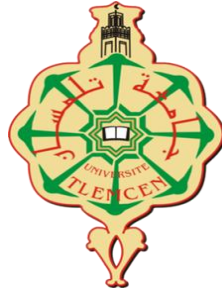
PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC AND POPULAR REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA

MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

UNIVERSITY OF ABOU BEKR BELKAID TLEMCEM

FACULTY OF LETTERS AND LANGUAGES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH



**Assessment of Students' Cultural Awareness in
British Literature through Women Writers:
the Case of 1st Year Master Students.**

Summary

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Academic Year: 2016-2017

Summary

The teaching of literature has gained an important place in the Algerian Higher Education mainly in foreign language classrooms. Yet, literature is generally linked to the teaching of culture since it reflects the cultural values of the writer and of his/her society. In fact, there is a general agreement that literature is considered as a source of cultural enrichment for learners. However, the assessment of the cultural aspects in literature has been the major goal of the research work.

As far as the teaching of literature is concerned, the assessment of students' cultural awareness through literature is of a great importance. Besides, to be aware about other cultures is to know about other thoughts, traditions and religions. It is worth noting that the assessment in literature has a positive influence on the students' motivation and behaviours towards learning foreign languages and knowing about different cultures. As a result, assessment enhances the students' thinking and enables them to use their knowledge and apply it to the real life situation. For this reason, the main objective of this research concentrates on the relationship that exists between literature, culture and assessment.

Hence, it is obvious that the real problem of EFL classes in Algeria is the lack of assessment of the cultural components of the literary text. This may lead to the development of a negative attitude towards foreign cultural values, and then, students are not given the opportunity to comment, criticize or evaluate these values referring to their culture. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to raise students' consciousness about different cultures in order to be familiar with and to upgrade their level of understanding and knowledge, by using different pedagogical tools.

Thus, the specific objective of the present work is to investigate the way EFL students are assessed in literature mainly in the cultural side, and try to find some adequate methods and pedagogical tools for the assessment. This general aim has been discussed through four chapters.

So, chapter one attempts to provide a theoretical background of the research and sheds light on the most common comforts and difficulties the EFL students are

confronted to, mainly in the assessment of their cultural awareness through literature. Also, it has been devoted to the definitions of the most important concepts of this research which are assessment, culture and literature. In fact, it has been shown that assessment of students learning begins with the educational values and also it can be used for illuminating questions that students really care about. Besides, this chapter has dealt with the various theoretical and practical issues concerning the role of literature including its different approaches to language teaching in enhancing the linguistic, communicative and cultural competences. However, the primary focus is on the strategies and methods used for the assessment of literary works in the cultural side.

The second chapter describes the methodology used in the study for data collection in order to discuss the following research questions:

- 1-* Do students assimilate the different cultural aspects in the Victorian literary texts?
- 2-* What are the characteristics of current assessment relating to the cultural aspects in literature lectures?
- 3-* How can both culture learning objectives and their assessment be improved?

The answers to these questions may provide the following research hypotheses:

- 1-* Yes, the students can assimilate the different cultural aspects in the Victorian literary texts through the teaching of literature which plays a central role in raising the students' cultural awareness. It acts as telling them what is important in life and how life might be lived this way rather than that way.
- 2-* Cultural awareness can be assessed via Literature since this latter has not only disciplinary purposes but more broadly educational ones to prepare students for their civic responsibility and moral and ethical thoughtfulness as well.

- 3- The assessment of students' cultural awareness is based on teaching/learning methods that will encourage the students to think independently and critically. In addition, assessment will serve for both curriculum aims and educational end goals.

Eventually, this chapter provides a general description of the English language teaching/learning situation within the University of Tlemcen, department of English, as well as a general presentation of the women writers module that aims at introducing a lot of cultural concepts of the Victorian age. Additionally, this chapter focuses on the collection of quantitative and qualitative data and a description of the sample population of the study which is concerned with first year Master students 'Literature and Civilization' under the LMD system and they have already obtained the Licence degree, and some selected literature teachers whose their experiences vary from one teacher to another. To do this effectively, four research instruments are opted for measurement. At first classroom observation was done with the teacher who is in charge of the module of women writers. Additionally, it was done during the first semester of the academic year 2015-2016 with first year Master students and more precisely during the period when they deal with the Victorian Era. As a matter of fact, classroom observation was the way to reveal about literature classes and how students can assimilate the different cultural aspects, also the most important thing is the way of assessing the cultural awareness. Then, the students' questionnaire has been constructed for the purpose of refracting light on how and what to assess in students' cultural awareness and it appears with Mixed questions including Close-ended and Open-ended questions in order to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data. The questionnaire comprises sixteen (16) questions addressed to seventy (70) students but only twenty-seven (27) have participated and have given their responses. After that, the teachers' interview is addressed to four (4) Literature teachers to screen their perspectives and assumptions about the students' cultural awareness. Besides, the questions in the interview were fourteen (14) and they were semi-structured. The researcher has opted for this type of interview because of its flexibility and pleasant latitude. At the end, Test was mainly another self-design tool used in this work to collect data. The

purpose of using such a research instrument is to confirm, adding to classroom observation, if the assessment of students' cultural awareness is really done or not in the exam. It is worth noting that the test was done and corrected by the teacher. The investigator in his/her turn has done the analysis of the students' interpretation and the teacher' assessment at the same time taking into consideration the cultural awareness as a major task.

The third chapter is concerned with the practical side of the research and it consists of data collection and analysis. All the data gathered from the above mentioned research instruments are analysed and interpreted in this chapter in order to confirm or disconfirm the research hypotheses.

Therefore, the information gathered from the students' questionnaire revealed that the informants are interested by the module of Literature and more precisely women writers module, since the majority of the students are female. So, they gave more attention.

The purpose behind these questions is to understand and to know how students deal with new cultures through literature and how they are assessed by the teacher either during the class or in the exams. Therefore, it is possible to teach all kinds of literature without disturbing or opposing cultures, religious attitudes and feelings. So while analyzing a literary text, at first the teacher presents the literary work as it is. He also presents the contemporary society on which the work is written with reference to the cultural aspects as well. Then, in order to evaluate the students' understanding, the teacher, sometimes, asks them to compare that society and culture with the values of Muslim society. But most of the time, he asks some questions to the students to make them aware of the universality and absoluteness of certain values of life

From the collected data, one may say that students can make a difference between the various cultures they dealt with but without insisting on the positive and negative sides that are beneficial for them. Hence, for some students there is no problem when facing other cultures but for the others it is really difficult.

Concerning the assessment of students' cultural awareness, it is noticed that students don't care a lot about this. They learn quantitatively and not qualitatively.

The answers obtained from the interview which was addressed to Literature teachers confirm that the teaching of Literature is of a paramount importance for students. They learn about other cultures, traditions and values.

The interviewees also reveal that the assessment of students' cultural awareness is not really done. That is, in Literature, a literary text may contribute to enhance the students' cultural awareness especially if it deals with different societies and cultures such as texts concerning the Victorian Era. It is done unconsciously during the class and not in the exam. Yet, it is done through debates or group discussions but in a limited time.

Therefore, each one of the informants has his/her main objectives to tackle in teaching Literature and also the way of analyzing the literary text. These objectives vary from one teacher to another and they are concerned with the students' cultural awareness. The focus is on the presentation of the universal code of morality, as well as the development of students' interpretive opinions. So, teachers of Literature have many specific disciplinary and cognitive goals. They want their students to grow intellectually, mature personally and to develop socially.

Although, for the assessment, they all focus on a common point which is the form and the content related to what they learned during the semester. The main objective behind the assessment is to make learning stimulating and enjoyable by increasing the involvement of the students through class discussions and making tasks more interesting.

On the other hand, classroom observation was done with the teacher who is in charge of the module of women writers, through attending several sessions with 1st year Master students in the first semester during the period they dealt with the Victorian Era texts. The researcher uses observation check list and it has been noticed that the results have been divided into positive and negative answers. Starting with the positive ones. The teacher attendance is regular and on time.

Concerning the materials and the methodology used, he/she is well equipped and organized. He/she uses printed texts to be analysed and discussed orally in the literary side. He/she talks about different historical times especially the Victorian Age since the students are concerned with. Therefore, the students are motivated and try to voice their personal point of views.

In contrast, there are some negative answers too. The majority of the students, if not all, do not prepare the text at home, so they can't answer each others' questions, i.e. there is no existence of group discussion. Moreover, the text analysis is commonly based on a literary analysis regarding the author, the message behind the text, social classes and the position of women in the Victorian Era (Women Writers). So, the cultural side is more or less tackled in an unconscious way. This means that the teacher when coming across a passage speaking about culture that represents something about the country so, they debate on it briefly. Additionally, the students sometimes waste time in searching for the meaning of words rather than focusing on the cultural components of the text that can prepare them for their overall lives.

At last, the assessment of students' cultural awareness is not really done either in class or in the exam. The students are aware of some cultural similarities and differences between different societies that are referred to during the class. For example the students are comparing between their culture, tradition and religion and the ones they appear in the text, i.e. the home culture and the target culture.

After the students' questionnaire, the teachers' interview and classroom observation, the researcher used the test analysis as a complement to classroom observation in order to assess the students' cultural awareness through what they have seen during the previous lectures in women writers module. In other words, this test analysis is used to gauge the degree of students' improvement.

Some of the students have been within the topic. They have good interpretations and notions on what they have done in the class either for the context or characters of the text done since they used them as examples in order to argue

their answers. The only thing missing in all students' answers is to give other different cultural points of views that can create or support the intercultural understanding. Then the majority of the students have been in between. Their answers are less argued than those of the first class and even here there is no reference to cultural components. Whereas, for the answers of the rest of the students neither the content nor the form are acceptable for the teacher.

Therefore, the test analysis aims at showing the type of questions and topics the students face in the exams. Also, the most important points, the teacher focuses on when assessing the students, are the appropriateness of both the content and the form as well.

However, all the findings confirmed that students are assessed during the class through discussions or debates but in an unconscious way, whereas, in the exams they are not. Besides, almost all the informants considered assessment in Literature as not an easy task because it is something subjective, that is why, the teachers focus much more on the form and the content in the exams. Yet, for enhancing the students' cultural awareness, assessment would be based on different teaching/learning methods. It would target the moral and ethical thoughtfulness of students and yet it would contribute to achieve the desired cultural revival. Furthermore, the promotion of intercultural teaching allows the students to build new knowledge about the native culture and the target culture as well. It may help students to achieve a high multicultural literacy level and foster the students' acceptance of cultural differences and interest in the target culture.

The last chapter presents some useful suggestions and recommendations for the sake of improving the assessment of students' cultural awareness with regard to the teaching/learning methods of literature in general and culture in particular. These suggestions and recommendations include: the selection of the literary text according to the students' cultural background and by making it relevant to their experiences. The use of role play activities in order to demonstrate the differences between the students' culture and the target one in similar situations, so that they will be aware about the good and bad behaviours and manners. Also, to facilitate

the process of assessment through introducing literature circles that are an ideal reading instructional method in holding students accountable for their own understanding of literature. Then, to relate texts and therefore assessment to the Islamic worldview where learners can benefit by studying these texts and thereby enrich their knowledge of western culture and civilization. This will eventually facilitate a deeper understanding between Islam and the West. Moreover, encouraging teachers' training in the domain of assessment and evaluation will improve the teaching/learning process too. Some other pedagogical activities are suggested after dealing with the reading comprehension of the literary text, and these activities are samples used to facilitate the assessment for both teachers and learners and also to promote the students' cultural awareness. Accordingly, much of the motivational advice are offered to teachers by some scholars and researchers to facilitate the process of assessment. One among these advice is to make texts motivating and to relate classroom topics and activities to the students' everyday experiences, backgrounds and preferences. To make this clearer is that the ideal case for teachers would be to create a classroom atmosphere in which questions and discussions about the target culture, comparisons between students' native culture and the target culture will reinforce the students' language learning. Also, it is important to keep in mind that the readers complete the writer's work by bringing their own life experiences and ideas to it to make meaning. Also, they need to be trained to analyse and evaluate cultural concepts and values to develop their critical ability. Therefore, teachers should free their students from time to time from the unit theme and engage them in a cultural notion for discussion and debate in order to correct some generalizations and stereotypes. As well, to provide original cultural facts and illustrate real life events.

Finally, this work is an attempt to foster the students' comprehension of the cultural components of the literary text, as well as, to facilitate the assessment of literature for teachers. Also, it is an attempt to encourage students to think independently and to enhance their knowledge, then, to make them aware of the useful and harmful elements of the selected texts.

Thus, to improve the teaching/learning process, classroom assessment can be a valuable source of information for teachers and students. The realization of this type of dynamic, continual assessment will depend on providing teachers with the knowledge and resources to integrate assessments into the learning process.

Based on the research findings, the study suggests that an institutional support is needed to foster alternative assessment approaches for EFL students. In addition, another factor that will increase the assessment of students' cultural awareness and support authentic assessments approaches could yield by embedding cultural awareness assessment as a subject in the curriculum of education faculties. Furthermore, to increase the knowledge of classroom assessment within higher education institutions, short-term course, workshops and seminars might be conducted and supported.

To conclude with, the present research has attempted to provide a clear idea of the importance of assessment in literature mainly when the focus is on the students' cultural awareness. However, the teaching of literature is so related to the teaching of culture that it plays a major role in raising the students' cultural consciousness. That is why, teachers may design the syllabus according to their students' preferences and needs. Moreover, they need to select some texts that are full of cultural knowledge and also, to introduce texts that are updated in order to make students doing the comparison between different cultures and to overcome the linguistic and cultural differences.

Therefore, assessment may be easier and more encouraged after a working session of reading comprehension that is followed by debates based on the cultural aspects of the home culture and the target one. Taboo subjects have to be treated too, since they are the means of enhancing cultural awareness and helping students to cope with real life experiences. In the same vein, a critical look at literary texts from an Islamic perspective is needed because Islam is deemed to be a religion that pervades all aspects of human life. In fact, assessing students in the light of Islamic views is an important intellectual challenge for both teachers and students. This technique allows them to benefit from what is good in the literary text and protect

them from what is morally and culturally harmful and contrary to their religious values. At last, as far as the quality teaching is concerned, an accurate appraisal of the assessment is required in order to support and develop both the teaching and learning process because of the increased international competitions and the introduction of new information technologies.