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EFL Teachers and Learners' Perceptions towards the Use of Social Networks for Improving Cross-cultural Communication Case study of Mila University Center

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirement of the Master Degree in
Didactics of Foreign Languages

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Dedication

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful,

my thanks are due to the Almighty Allah for helping me all along this journey;

my humble research is dedicated to my family and friends who supported me all the way to

complete this work.

ImadEddine

Dedication

In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate,

I dedicate this research to my parents who have spent days and nights to raise me and give me the best education.

I dedicate this work to my beloved family and friends who supported and encouraged me to complete this work.

Mouad

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Abstract

This study aims at investigating EFL teachers' and learners' perceptions towards the role of social networks in enhancing cross-cultural communication. The hypothesis suggested indicates that the use of social networks would result in enhancing cross-cultural communication from both teachers' and learners' perspectives. The research took place at Mila University Center by using two questionnaires: one was given to eight (08) EFL university teachers and the other was addressed to fifty (50) students at the same university. On the one hand, the students' questionnaire revealed that students' use of social networks has a great impact on their cross-cultural performance and the development of different aspects of communication across cultures. It has also proved the preparedness of the learners to integrate the use of social networks in education to develop students' cross-cultural communication. On the other hand, the teachers' questionnaire also demonstrated the importance of using social networks in developing certain aspects of communication cross-culturally. In addition to that, the teachers consider the use of social networks in education to be helpful for students, but only as a complementary tool, as it does not cover all the aspects of communication. therefore, both students and teachers have positive perceptions about the use of social networks to enhance cross-cultural communication.

Keywords: cross-cultural communication, learners' perceptions, teachers' perceptions, social networks

List of abbreviations

CCC: Cross-Cultural Communication

SN: Social Networks

SNS: Social Network Sites

Q: Question

%: Percentage

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General Introduction

Recently we live in a connected world which is a result of our advanced technology. Many processes, such as money exchange, trading, and most importantly, communication, are made easier by today's technology. With the advent of current social networks, communication has become smoother, which includes a variety of forms, such as face-to-face conversation, texting, vocal communication, and so on. Because of the large number of people who use social networks sites, communication nowadays is not limited only to family and friends, but it also involves other interactions including communicating with people from different cultures. This type of communication is known as cross-cultural communication, and it occurs when people from different cultural backgrounds communicate with one another. Social networks sites are considered suitable place for this kind of communication.

1. **Statement of the Problem**

In recent years, people have become increasingly interconnected as a result of technological advancements. Consequently, engaging with people from other cultures has become increasingly common and frequently essential in people's daily lives, and at many times, the people who communicate with each other have different cultural backgrounds. Social networks play a great role in this kind of communication across cultures. As a matter of fact, when using social networks, users spend a lot of time interacting with or meeting new individuals. Starting from this point, it is necessary to ascertain whether social networks have any effect on enhancing cross-cultural communication.

2. **Aim of the Study**

This study sheds light on the relationship between the use of social networks and the enhancement of cross- cultural communication. It aims at investigating teachers' and learners' perceptions towards the role of social networks in enhancing cross-cultural communication.

3. Research Questions

This study is carried out basically in an attempt to answer the following questions:

1- Does the use of social networks help students improve cross-cultural communication?

2- What are the teachers and students' perceptions towards the use of social networks for improving cross-cultural communication?

3- What are the main aspects that social networks can develop in cross-cultural communication from teachers' and learners' perspectives?

4. Hypothesis

This research is grounded upon the following hypothesis:

Both students and teachers would agree that the use of social networks results in enhancing cross-cultural communication.

5. Means of Research

To test the hypothesis, a teachers' questionnaire and a students' questionnaire are administered to both students and teachers of English at Mila University center during the academic year 2021/2022. The study population is the EFL students and teachers at Mila University center. The sample is fifty (50) students and eight (08) teachers at the university.

6. Research Structure

This work is divided into two chapters: a theoretical part and a practical one. The first chapter is a review of the literature related to the study namely cross-cultural communication and social networks .It consists of two sections. The first section is concerned with cross-cultural communication. It starts with definition, the importance of the concept, and its relation to language, culture, and communication. It also highlights the main barriers to cross-

cultural communication, and the ways to develop it. The second section focuses on defining social networks, giving a brief historical background of their evolvement; a list of the most known websites, in addition to some of the advantages and the disadvantages resulting from their use. It also includes the relation between social networks and cross-cultural communication. The second chapter of this work is the practical part. This chapter focuses on the data gathered via the research means, the data analysis, and the discussion of the main findings. The dissertation ends with a general conclusion derived from the data analysis and discussion with some implications for cross-cultural communication.

Chapter One: Cross-cultural Communication and Social Networks

Introduction

Technology has made the life of humans easier than ever, which is now used in almost all the aspects of life, including communication. The internet in general and social networks sites in particular, has had a significant impact on the process of communication between people. Communication now is easier because of the numerous options that social networks provide for the users. One of the most significant options that social networks provide is the ability to communicate with people from all over the world, which has created a lot of situations of communication between people of different cultures, and which is known as cross-cultural communication.

This chapter represents the theoretical part of this study. It is divided into two sections; the first one deals with cross-cultural communication and the elements related to it, while the second one provides some information about social networks and some researches about the relation between both of the variables.

Section One: Cross-cultural communication

In recent years, people have been getting closer and closer to each other thanks to the technological development and the increase of the interconnectedness between the different regions of the world in almost all the aspects of life, which is known as the globalization. Today, communicating with foreign people has become a very common activity in the life of individuals, and sometimes necessary, and in many times, the people communicating with each other have completely different cultural backgrounds. This type of communication is known as cross-cultural communication.

In this section we'll try to define some key elements related to cross cultural communication. These elements are language, culture, communication, and the relation between them. The reason behind defining them is because: language is the primary tool for communication, and culture is the source of our ideas and thoughts that we use to communicate, and we need to understand what is the process of communication and it's types to move then to defining cross-cultural communication, it's importance, the barrier that can effect it, and develop it.

1.1.1. Language

The language for human beings is the distinct from all other known animal ways of communication. Language allows people to express thoughts and ideas by using sentences compose from specific words, verbs and objects ...Etc. Language is widely understood to be a means of communication, but what exactly does the term mean?

The term language has been given numerous definitions throughout the years. Keraf (1980) said that language is a means of human communication; it can be written or spoken, including the use of words in structured way.

According to Sapir (1921) "Language is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols." (p.7) In other words, when describing language as non-instinctive, Sapir means that no language was created by any person individually and it can only develop in a community with agreement about rules that show the correct and incorrect uses of symbols.

In another definition, Saussure et al (1959) stated that : "Language is a system of signs that express ideas, and is therefore comparable to a system of writing, the alphabet of deaf mutes, symbolic rites, polite formulas, military signals, etc. But it is the most important of all these systems."

Moreover, Trager (1972) defined language as follows: "Language is the learned system of arbitrary vocal symbols, by means of which human beings, as members of a society, interact and communicate in terms of their culture." Standing on a similar ground that takes the power of symbolization into account .Bourdieu (1991) suggested that language was constructed by society. His novel approach claimed that language was neither statically nor genetic; rather, it was developed based on history, and shaped up due to social construction. His definition of language implies the tight and reciprocal relation between language and society. Indeed, language is a social construct which, itself, serves to construct a society.

1.1.2. Culture

The word culture is derived from the Latin word "cultura" which has the meaning of cultivation in agricultural sense (Krauskopf, 2015).Culture has several definitions proposed by many scholars. According to kroeber et al (1948),it refers to

> the mass of learned and transmitted motor reactions, habits, techniques ,ideas, and values—and the behavior they induce—is what constitutes culture is at one and the same time the totality of products of social men, and a tremendous force affecting all human beings, socially and individually.

Tylor (1871) has a similar definition of culture when he said that "culture or civilization taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole Which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, low, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as member of society."

Hurn & Tomalin (2013) Proposed a summarized definition of culture,, claiming that, it is a system of shared beliefs and values which are learned rather than inherited. It is composed of those values and beliefs, norms, symbols and ideologies that make up the total way of life of a people. Culture has also been defined as a form of 'map' which is implanted

in us by the society in which we are born. This 'map' defines reality, sets the guidelines for behavior, and thus developing our value system, and establishes the rules for problem solving or explaining events that are not normally encountered.

These scholars perceive culture as a group of habits, ideas, beliefs... etc., that are acquired or learned by a human from his/her social life ,so culture is the result of the human interaction with other members of his/her society that effects and shapes the way how he/she thinks, acts, and deals with any situation in life.

1.1.3. Language and Culture

Researchers in linguistics and anthropology confirm the closed cycle between language and culture. This means that these two concepts are strongly related and they can never be separated.

Language and culture are two faces for one coin and language learning should include culture learning. Learners who master linguistics must not assume that they will have the ability to communicate fluently like native speakers; they must master both linguistics and culture elements. The relationship between language and culture has been discussed by many scholars.

Allwright & Bailey (1991) said that when learners start learning a second language, they also start learning a new culture. Brown (2007) said that "Language is a part of culture and culture is a part of language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture." In other words, the two concepts are closely and inevitably related to such an extent that one cannot stand without the other. Moreover, Language and culture are inseparable and learning the target language does not only involve knowing the rules of that language, but also knowing how to

become able to use this language in different cultural situations. Since language and culture reflect each other, the language cannot stand alone without culture and vice versa.

According to, Kramsch (1998) this connection between language and culture can be explained in three steps. First, language is used to show the facts and views shared by the individuals of a certain society. Second, we find culture in the language people use in everyday life. Third, the people who speak a language in a specific society consider their language as a symbol of their culture.

Perhaps, a possible way to make a conclusion for the close relationship and this long discussion about language and culture and their interconnectedness is to agree with Byram & Morgan (1994) who precisely explained the relation between the two aspects through hyphenation: language and-culture. And they expressed the relationship of language and culture as follows:

-culture refers to the full style or way of life of a given society and it dominates all the shared products of human in this society.

-Language is part of culture and plays a very important role in, it is influenced and shaped by culture and It reflects culture in everyday life of a society.

- The understanding or learning of one of them needs the knowledge of the other.

1.1.4. Communication

In etymology, the Latin root of the word "communication" is "communicare" which has the meaning of "to share" or "to make common" (Cobley& Schulz, 2013). Lunenberge (2010) suggested that the relation between the Latin root and the meaning "common" means that there will be no communication without a common understanding of the meaning between the interlocutors.

Communication is simply the process of sending and receiving messages and information with the understanding of their interpretation and meaning (Steinberg,1994). So that for communication to happen we must have at least two sides (a sender and a receiver), who share the same language and the same way of interpreting that language.

There are multiple elements in the communication process, which are the sender, the receiver, the message, the channel, the encoding and decoding, and the feedback. The sender is the one who starts the process by selecting the words, symbols, or gestures that form his message, and which is called encoding. The message then will be sent to the receiver through a channel. The channel of communication can be face to face, a call using mobile, a letter…etc. When the message is received, the receiver, then can decode it and give feedback to it and that feedback determines whether the message was correctly understood or not (Lunenberge, 2010).

1.1.4.1.Types of Communication

Communication has two major types which are: the verbal communication and the nonverbal communication.

1.1.4.1.1.   Verbal Communication

It is the type of communication using sounds and language to send a message and it represents the primary tool for communication (Hanes, 2018). This type of communication can be divided into oral and written communication.

The first type, oral communication, is where the spoken words are used to transmit the message either face to face or through some devices like the telephone, radio, or the television. This kind of communication has the advantage of the quickness in sending

information and receiving feedback, in addition to the flexibility in communicating ("Types of Communication", 2009).

The second type is written communication which takes place when communicating through the use of written signs and symbols .the information in the written form can be transmitted through letters, emails, or memos, and it is influenced by the style of writing, the vocabulary used in writing, and the clarity of the language ("Types of Communication", 2009).

1.1.4.1.2. Non-Verbal Communication

It is the process of communicating without the use of words. Nonverbal communication does not only refer to the body language, it also includes the tone of voice, distance, touch, facial expressions, or even some speech features like the voice quality, rate, pitch, volume, and speaking style, and these features are called "paralanguage". The nonverbal type has a great part in communication, because more than a half of the message being sent is nonverbal, in fact, and depending on the individual and the situation, the nonverbal communication in our daily life can vary between "60% to 90% " from the whole process of communication (Sooriya, 2017).

1.1.5. Culture and Communication

When speaking about Communication, language and culture should take a place in our speech because they together form the solid ground upon which communication takes place. Many studies try to find the relationship between two culture and communication, and there are different views on this subject.

kramsch (1993) expresses this relationship between them and said that :

The relationship between culture and communication nevertheless, is very complex and interrelated since they are joined together in a partnership relation. First, cultures are created through communication; that is, communication is the means of human interaction, second cultures are the results of social communication and they give it an understanding and without it, it would be impossible to preserve and pass along cultures from one generation to another. (p.9)

So, we can say that communication looks like a bridge which combines cultures. Communication is a part of culture and we can say that communication shapes culture, and the reverse also is right however. Furthermore, because cultures differ, from one to another, the communication practices and behaviors of individuals reared in those cultures will also be different, and the degree of influence culture has on intercultural communication is a function of the dissimilarity between the cultures (Porter& Samovar, 1991).

In other words, even persons who live in the same society with different cultural backgrounds would act and behave differently; for example, in the way of thinking, beliefs and tradition … etc. This effect of cultures on communication shows the distinctions between them.

1.1.6. Cross-Cultural Communication

.According to the Encyclopedia of Communication Theory (2009) cross cultural communication can be defined as "communication that takes place between members of whole cultures in contact or between their cultural spokespersons or representatives".

Another definition is provided by Kazdin(2000) when he mentioned that "cross cultural communication refers to the exchange of information between people of different cultural backgrounds", he also added that the term cross-cultural communication is

highly related to intercultural communication, in fact there is no difference between them when it comes to communication, but there is a big difference when it comes to the field of research, because cross cultural research refers to the comparison of two cultures in a certain subjects, while intercultural research refers to the study of the situation in which people with different cultures interact with each other. Furthermore, and in a very similar definition to the previous one, Hurn & Tomalin (2013) stated that cross cultural communication is about the way communication goes between people with various cultures either directly face to face or from distance.

In a nutshell, cross cultural communication is simply the kind of communication that occurs between people with different cultures and backgrounds.

1.1.7. The Importance of Cross-Cultural Communication

According to Tannen (1985) The importance of studying cross cultural communication lies in the fact that for people to reach any private or public goals, they have to interact with each other, and in more and more situations, the people interacting with each other have different cultural backgrounds. Moreover, and even at the global level, the fate of humans depends on the negotiations between the government's Representatives that have different cultures and different kinds of communication.

1.1.8. Barriers to Cross-Cultural Communication

Hurn & Tomalin (2013) suggested that a lot of misunderstandings may occur in a conversation of people with different cultural backgrounds, these misunderstandings are the result of certain factors that prevent having a proper communication. The Barriers of CCC proposed by Hurn & Tomalin (2013) will be mentioned as following:

1.1.8.1. Ethnocentrism

Ethnocentrism refers to the way people judge members of other cultures according to their own culture. Ethnocentrism may exist in every society in the world, because the members of almost all cultures thinks their own culture as the best, and they may tend to describe others as bad, stupid, or immoral.

People can give negative attributes to other cultures either because of their ignorance about that culture, or because of their laziness to learn about the other culture differences so they just assume similarity.

1.1.8.2.Cultural Diversity

A lot of people do not recognize that cultures have different norms and behaviors when dealing with the different life situations. Lacking the knowledge about this fact or ignoring it may lead to misunderstandings in communication or even conflicts between communicators.

1.1.8.3. Assuming Similarity with one's own Culture

People tend to consider foreign cultures to be similar to their own instead of understanding the differences. For example, both the British and the Americans assume that their cultures to be similar, and only few differences exist between them, but in fact, there are a lot of aspects in which the two cultures differ.

1.1.8.4. Stereotyping

Stereotypes are a group of beliefs and attitudes towards another different group of people with making assumptions about how they would act or behave and what they believe. Stereotyping allows for classifying people from other cultures in a simple and fast way, and this classification might be positive (by generalizing the good traits on certain people like: ambition, bravery, or cleverness) or negative(by generalizing the bad traits like: laziness and

stupidity). A stereotype cannot be harmful unless it was believed to be the fact about the other group of people, and that's because in most of the time people have stereotypes that are derived from the media or from the society's opinion and not from a personal experience. Furthermore, even though that people are getting closer to each other due to the technological development, stereotypes still exist, and people are still being categorized according to their race, gender, social class, and dress. So there is certainly a need for people to have a knowledge about others, so that they can avoid causing conflicts or offence with others.

1.1.9. Developing Cross-Cultural Communication

As we have seen earlier, cross cultural communication is so important in today's world, and developing it is a must for people to avoid any kind of misunderstandings or conflicts. Menaka (2018) Gave a number of tips and skills to develop cross cultural communication which he explains as follows:

-Respecting the people from other cultures can help the process of communication by reducing the stress that they may feel when interacting.

-Paying attention to the gestures that a person can do in a conversation is also important. Those gestures may convey a message which the speaker does not want to.

-Each culture has its own slang words, and because these words might not be known to others or might be interpreted in a different way, so they must be avoided.

-In the same case of slang words, humor also must be avoided. Humor might be interpreted in a bad way, because if something is funny in one culture, that doesn't mean it's funny in the others, and people from other cultures can miss the humor's meaning.

-The use of Negative questions may cause confusion for foreign people. The questions must be simple and easy to understand.

-learning some basic things about the new culture can help in the process of communication, and show the people of that culture that they are being respected.

Adler & Gunderson (2008) also proposed some key element that must be taken into consideration when communicating with foreigners using our own language. These elements are going to be explained as following:

- **Verbal behavior:** when communicating with foreigners, one's must use a very clear, slow, and simple language with simple sentences and avoiding compound ones which can be hard to understand. Repeating the idea when needed is also very helpful in this situation.

- **Nonverbal behavior:** this includes the use of the suitable facial expressions and hand gestures to convey the Right meaning. The speed of talking also must be appropriate, as taking more pauses can be beneficial for the understanding of the receivers.

- **Accurate interpretation:** the communicator must not be In hurry when the other person is silent and start talking immediately. Instead, waiting the other person to talk is more appropriate, because he/she is probably thinking of what to say, translating from the mother language, or it can be a cultural norm. The communicator is also asked to not judge others by being stupid just because of their wrong pronunciation or poor grammar, as these are just signs for their use of foreign language.

- **Comprehension:** it is about checking if the receiver has understood the message correctly and whether he/she can rephrase in other words.

- **Design:** understanding a message in a foreign language is much more harder than the first one, so dividing the message and taking more frequent brakes can help the listener to understand properly

- **Motivation:** it is simply encouraging the nonnative speakers to engage more in communication with avoiding any kind of embarrassing them.

So, this section has dealt with cross cultural communication. It has provided an overview about the related concepts to CCC starting with language then moving to culture and communication. After that, a definition of CCC was provided with the importance, the Barriers, and the ways to develop it.

Section Two: Social Networks and their Relation to Cross-Cultural Communication

People have always sought out opportunities to connect and interact with each other. In this age of digitalization, the internet has provided the tools for people to be socially active thanks to proliferation of social networks sites. Relationships now start, flourish, and end on social networks. In this section, we are going to start with an overview about the 21st century skills which include the use of technology and social media as an important skill in these days. The section then provides a definition of social networks, its history, types, most common websites, and the advantages and disadvantages of this kind of websites. The section concludes with the clarification of the relation between social networks and cross cultural communication by providing some of the studies in the field.

1.2.1. 21st Century Skills

21st century skills refer to the knowledge, life skills, career skills, habits, and traits that are critically important to student success in today's world, particularly as students move on to college, the workforce, and future life.

According to, Mishra & Mehta (2017) the 21st century skills are a group of skills, work skills, knowledge ,habits, and traits that are critically important to success in this century world, especially in the future professional life . These skills are different but they share some common goal which is providing effective learning in the educational contexts.

In addition, Santosa (2019) stated that the pedagogies applying these skills focus on increasing thinking to a high level and learning dispositions. Further, the higher levels of thinking skills must be gained from the lower ones, but the focus in today's learning must be on providing opportunities for students to be ready in the global workforce with skills of the future, like critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, collaboration, and communication. In other words, the skills contain abilities and learning dispositions that can be applied in

different areas and they considered as success signals in the 21st century world and global workplaces by those of educators, businessmen, and governmental agencies…etc. Furthermore, there is a demand for educational systems to make the students prepared for their future professional life.

1.2.2. Types of the 21st Century Skills :

There are many skills in the 21ST century and each of them belongs to a specific type of Skills. According to van Laar et al (2017) there are three types of skills:

Firstly, there are some learning skills which include creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, communication and collaboration (the 4cs'). Secondly, we have life skills which are the type of Skills that people need in everyday life; these include flexibility and adaptability, imitativeness and self-direction, social and cross-cultural skills, productivity and accountability, leadership and responsibility. The third type, and which is very central to our study, has to do our subject is literacy skills which are concerned with information, media and technology (information, media and ICT literacy).

In addition, the 21st century's concept of literacy has strongly been related to the ability to use technology for gathering and sharing information. According to The International Reading Association "IRA" (2009) the literacies used by Students in nowadays are much different from those used by their parents or even those of students from just a decade ago. In other words, the concept of literacy now is related to the use of technology.

1.2.3. Definition of Social Networks:

Boyd and Ellison(2007) defined social networks as:

Web based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with

whom they share a connection , and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. (p.211)

They also added that the terms "social network sites" and "social networking sites" are often used interchangeably. It is worth noting, however, that the term "social networking" refers to the process of initiating new relationships with strangers although this is not the only aim nor the exclusive use of these sites, because "social network sites" are not necessarily used to meet new people, but rather to communicate with the already known people in the extended social network.

Another definition from Purcell (n.d) States that:

Social networking is a term used to describe websites that build online communities with the intent of building relationships among people with similar interests. These sites generally enable their subscribers: to post text, pictures, video, and various other forms of media content for others to view; to form and maintain relationships with other participants; and to engage in discussions around common interests with others. (p. 12)

In other words, social networks are the kind of websites that gives the users the ability to create their own profiles and use them to: communicate and share information with other users, create or maintain relationships, and to post any kind of media content to be seen by others.

1.2.4. A Historical Background of Social Networks

Social Network were introduced to the world of the internet in 1997 when people witnessed the appearance of the sixdegrees.com website. It was a totally new kind of websites, because it gave the users the ability to create their own profiles with a list of friends

to contact them. Six degrees did not have that much success and it was closed three years later. The reason behind its failure was that user at that time did not have much of social networks with friends who were online (Cassidy, 2006).

The next years have witnessed the emergence of more social network sites. In 2001 Adrian Scott launched a website called Ryze. This site allowed to create profiles, add friends, and send messages to them, and it is said that the creator of Friendster was inspired by this site (NGAK, 2011).

A year later, in 2002, Friendster shaped the form of social networks that we all know today, it wasn't only a website for interacting with the friends that the users already have, but to find new relationships through friends and interests (Chamat, 2020). Friendster became so popular at that time as it gained 3 million users in three months only. However, this website was transformed to a gaming site, and it was closed in 2015 (Dobrilova, 2022).

In 2003 both MySpace and LinkedIn became a part of the social networks world. MySpace focused on young adults users with its flashy features including music, while LinkedIn focused more on the business world, and it still the most popular professional networking site with 250 million users monthly (Chamat, 2020).

After three years, the world of social networks has changed forever. It was 2006 when the very famous social network site Facebook was released to the public. This website has gained millions of subscribers in very limited time thanks to the easy use of it and the content that it provides (Chamat, 2020).Social networks are still changing with time and more and more websites are entering this world, and while some of these websites have failed and were thrown away, some others have succeeded and became a part of the life of millions of people. Figure 1 illustrates the evolution of social networks (SNS) over some time
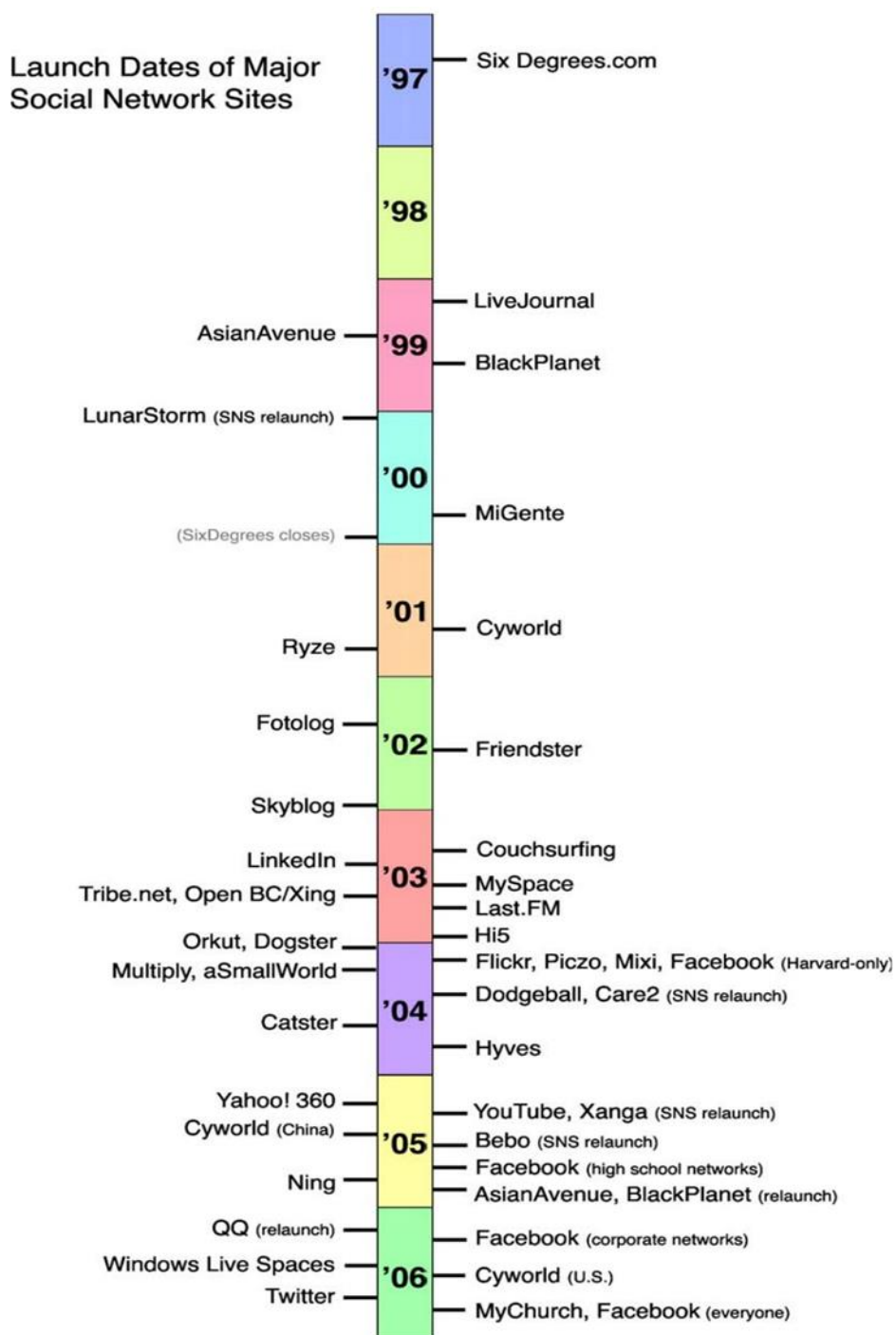
Figure 1: Timeline of the Launch Dates of many major SNSs and Dates when

Community Sites re- Launched with SNS Features (Boyd and Ellison, 2007)

1.2.5. Types of Social Networks

White (n.d.) stated that there are seven main types of social networks, which are summarized as following:

- Social connection: these aims at keeping the users connected to their friends and family members, for example: Facebook, Twitter, Google+, and MySpace.

- Multimedia sharing: made to allow the users to share video and photography content. An example for this is YouTube, and Flickr.

- Professional: designed for making relationships of a professional nature e.g.: LinkedIn, and classroom.

- Informational: made for people who want to learn or to answer a question about a certain problem e.g. the nature conservancy, and do-it-yourself community.

- Educational: designed primary for students who wants to join other students in making a project or a research, or connect with the teachers, some example of this kind of networks are: the Students room, the Math forum, and ePALS school blog

- Hobbies: it is the kind of websites that gathers groups of people with the same interest for a certain hobbies e.g. grow it, and my place at scrapbook.com.

- Academic: designed for researchers to share their researches and review others ones e.g. research gate, and academia.edu.

1.2.6. Most Popular Social Network Websites

The population of the social networks is growing day after day. The use of this kind of websites is becoming a part of the life of millions of users around the world. Here is a list of the most popular social networks in the world:

1.2.6.1. Facebook

Facebook was lanshed by Mark zukerberg in 2004 as a network for university students only, and with time it has grown so much till it became for everyone. Facebook is so popular today because of the many advantages and options it provides. For example, Facebook was one of the first sites to have the option of posting photos, and communicating with others

with the ability of creating one's own list of friends, keeping in touch with others all the time, and reading or watching anything that others posts and commenting to it (Gray & Fox, n.d.).

Today Facebook is at the top of the most popular social networks with more than2.9 billion users around the world (Lua, n.d.).

1.2.6.2.YouTube

YouTube was founded by the three PayPal employees: Chad Hurley, Steven Chen, and Jawed Karim in 2005. After leaving their job, they thought about making a service for uploading, watching, and sharing videos, and that led them to creating YouTube, which is a website that allows the users to upload videos on their web page (Miller, 2011).

YouTube stands as the second most popular social network after Facebook with more than 2.2 billion users worldwide ("YouTube - Statistics & Facts", 2022).

1.2.6.3.Whatsapp

With more than 1.5 billion users monthly, whatsapp is considered as the third most popular website in the world. Whatsapp was founded in 2009 by Brian Acton and Jan Koum, the Yahoo former employees, and it became owned by Facebook Company in 2014. Users of whatsapp are able to communicate with others through text messages, video calls, voice calls, or by sending photos and videos (Girdhar, 2022).

1.2.6.4.Instagram

It was created in 2010 for iOS programs only, but later it was introduced to android and windows programs. The main idea behind Instagram is to post photos with or without posting messages with them or modifying them. Instagram also became a part of the Facebook company in 2012 when it was acquired for $1 billion (Gray & Fox, n.d.).

1.2.7. Advantages of Social Networks

Nowadays, social networks are considered as necessary platforms for billions of users around the world in order to communicate and share thoughts whit friends, family and even with persons from different cultural backgrounds. Studies and people believe that social networks have numerous benefits reflect on people's lives. Respect some strict rules while using them of utmost importance, nevertheless.

According to Aghazamani (2010,as cited in Dwamena et al, 2016) said that social networking sites have become the most modern and attractive tools for connecting people throughout the world. In another claim, Valkenberg and Peter (2007, as cited in Drussel, 2012) said that the social networks helps in connecting people from every part of world, and improving confidence and feelings of well-being .

In other words , SNS become the most useful tools in the world; they positively affect the world in general by making it very connected small and a village-like because they facilitate people communication from every parts of the world . Moreover , according to Davis III et al.(2014), "Social media technology links people together in ways that resemble traditional feelings of connection, belonging, loosely defined memberships, exchange of feelings and ideas, and the reporting of experiences and actions."

Social networks have a great impact in educational domains, Vooren and Bess (2013) stated that "Current technology in education offers the students a forum to use such tools properly as they communicate with each other, their parents, and their teachers." To conclude SNS is a great way for communication and connecting people in this world, and also have a positive reflection on different domains such as education, business, banks and other numerous domains.

1.2.8. The Disadvantages of Social Networks

Social networks do not only have advantages; they have disadvantages, as well. Drahošová & Balco (2017) said that there is a large number of the disadvantages of using social media. They highlighted the main disadvantages which are the lack of security and internet addiction, the huge quantity of information which can be true or false, losing family and social connections, and wasting time which is marked as The worst effect.

In addition, Frazier (2015) in his study showed the relation between using social networks and the contemporary bad consequences. According to him, SNS affect negatively and directly grammar, spelling and writing by making them poor; they expose children to an online danger; they effect the productivity workers manifest; they also Create a big platform for bullying people especially because all or most of the information of users are exhibited to public paving the way to identity theft easy and other problems.

Social networks' negative effects also spread out to education. According to Zaidieh (2012) there are two negatives of using SNS in classrooms: the first one is that social networks can decrease students' motivation if they use them for long periods of time .that social networks used as media of teaching do not suit all students' preferences as many of them prefer face-to-face interactions.

To conclude this, we should never forget that SNS have large number of benefits and we are the only responsible about using them in a positive way or in the negative and that occurs only by respecting the rules and the internet policy.

1.2.9. The Relation between Social Networks and Cross-Cultural Communication

As previously said, the primary goal of social networks is to link individuals and form new relationships, and many of these new relationships are with people from different cultures. Cultures have collided like never before as a result of globalization and

technological Advancement, and with the rise of social networks usage, it has become vital to investigate the Implications of social networking on communication across cultures.

A research was conducted by Monika et al (2020) in two Japanese universities on the International students who came from different cultural backgrounds. The research was made to investigate the motives behind using each selected social media, and to what extent does the use of social media influencers intercultural communication competence .Most of The Participants have mentioned that they use social media with the motivation of knowing more About Their intercultural friends, sharing information, and communicating. Most of The participants also have agreed that social media assistance helped them to adapt with the new environment and to get along and strengthen their relation with the new friends. Even though that the results Of this study are not related directly to cross cultural communication, but they show that there is a way of using social networks in situations of interaction between different cultures to enhance the relation between the individuals.

Another research was conducted by Sawyer (2011) on the impact of social media on Intercultural adaptation. The research was conducted through the use of interviews often International students at the University of Rhode Island who were from other countries. The Interviews are designed to investigate the use of the interviewees of social media to adapt to their new life in the US. The results of the study show that the participants have already used social media to learn more about the new society norms, overcome the stereotypes, and to create a wider view about the culture. The results also indicate that social media helped the participants to have a feeling of belonging to the new culture by establishing new relationships, while in the same time, the kept in touch with their relatives and friends in their home country.

A third research was made in Turkey by Seyfi & Güven (2016) on the influence of new media On intercultural communication. The study was made on the students of the Erasmus program, which is a European Union student exchange program. Both qualitative and quantitative means of research were applied. The qualitative part was a group of interviews with 9 foreign people who were still in Turkey, and the quantitative part was a group of questions sent to 82 students from different countries. The results of this study show that the use of social media is a very useful tool to develop intercultural communication. Communication is facilitated by the usage of social media, as is learning and adapting to intercultural ideas.

Conclusion

In conclusion, cross-cultural communication refers to communication between people from various cultural backgrounds. Since interacting with foreigners is now lot easier than it once was, it is essential for people to understand this sort of communication and look for ways to improve it. The invention of the online website of communication known as social networks have made a great impact in the field of communication across cultures. It has even been noticed that this kind of websites have an effect on the way that people communicate and interact with members of other cultures, and this highlights the close connection between using social networks and communicating across cultures.

Chapter two: Data Analysis and Discussion

Introduction

This chapter provides information about the research methodology, the participants in the study, the description the research tools, the data collected through them and their analysis. It aims at investigating the role of social networks in enhancing cross cultural communication.

2.1. Methodology of Research

2.1.1 **Research Instruments**

This research was conducted through the use of two electronic questionnaires made using Google Forms via the links:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1lsIijKpdyIQVzZTQvRxyRPWBYimVD8SzpNAOWXUFmTo/prefill

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1X9bFxPDCYoPWv67OuEq_0_mBsZDJtsiuzUeUsGEk3c/prefill

The questionnaires were addressed to students and teachers of English at Mila University Center, respectively.

The students' questionnaire is made up of three sections. The first section aims at gathering general information about the students' age, gender, and level in English. The second section provides some of the learners' information about the cross cultural communication. In the third section we focus on the students' knowledge about social networks and their use in addition to their perceptions about the role of social networks in communication across cultures

The teachers' questionnaire is made up of three sections. The first section elicits some general information about our sample (teachers).The second one deals with the teachers information about cross cultural communication. The third section contains questions addressed to teachers to collect answers about social networks, their use, and their implementation in teaching. The last section is about the relation between social networks and cross cultural communication.

2.1.2. The Participants

The participants in this study consist of fifty (50) students of English of different levels who have been studying English at the Department of Foreign Languages at Mila University Center, and who are currently enrolled in the academic year 2021/2022, and eight (08) teachers of English currently working at the same department.

2.1.3. Data Analysis Procedure

As a tool to collect the needed information and data we combine two methods, the quantitative and the qualitative one, with the use of two questionnaires designed to teachers and learners. These two questionnaires include questions which are used for collecting the quantitative data, and some questions are formed to be an extent to explain the quantitative results in order to collect qualitative answers.

2.2. Data Analysis and Discussion

2.2.1. Students' Questionnaire Analysis

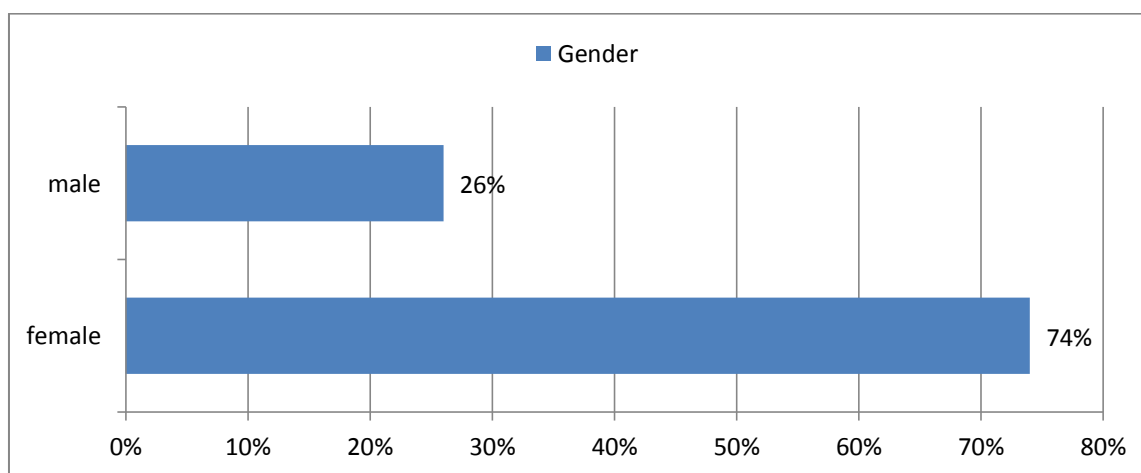- **Section One: General Information**

Q1: what is your gender?

Figure 2: Students' Gender

Figure 2 shows that from the fifty (50) participants we had in this questionnaire, 74% of them were females and the rest 26% were males. This indicates that the chosen sample (English language students) includes a higher proportion of females than males.

Q2: How old are you?
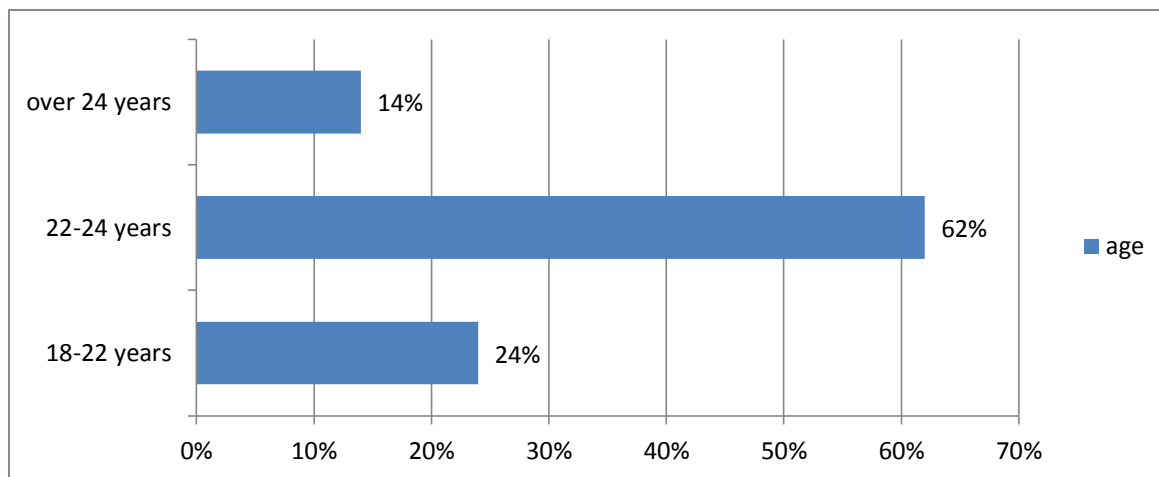
Figure 3: Participants' Age

Figure 3 represents three categories of the participants (students). The first category includes students aged between 18-22 years and they represent 24% of the sample, the second category represents students of 22-24 years old making the majority of our population with a percentage of 62%, and the third category, students aged over 24 years, which represents 14% of our sample. These data imply that students are adults and can presumably respond to all the research queries.

Q3: How do you evaluate your level in English?

Figure 4: Students' Level in English

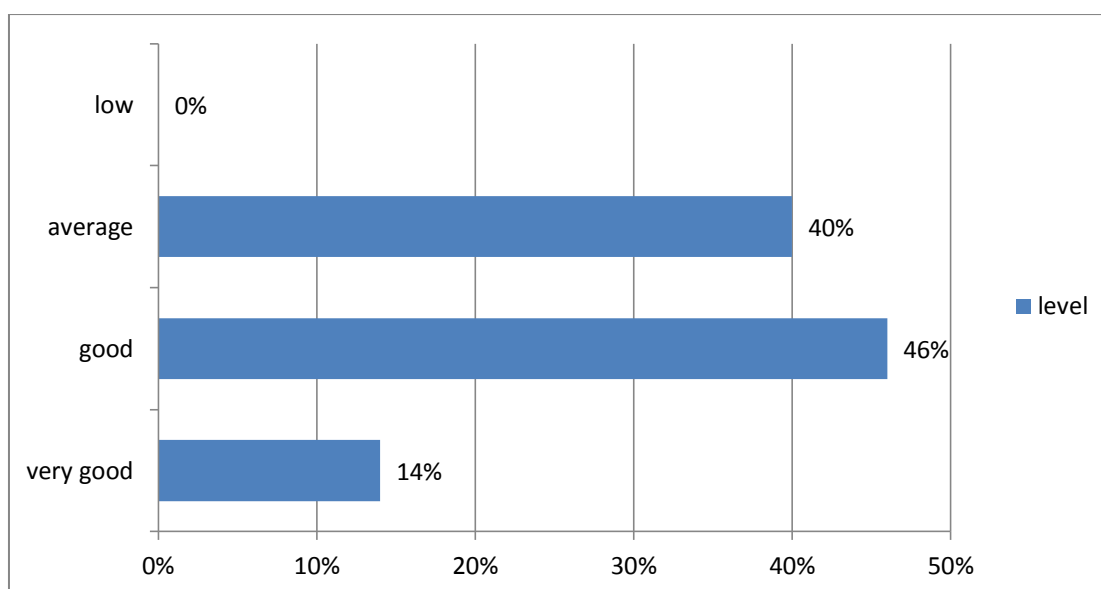From figure 4, we notice that students evaluated their level in English in one of three categories. The first category is students who considered their level in English to be very good with a percentage of (14%) from our population. The second category, which represents the majority(46%), are students who claimed their level in English to be good. the last one (40%) claimed to have an average level in English. None of the students evaluated their level as a low one. These results show that the majority of our students are satisfied with their level in English. Having an average level or more implies that these students can use English as the medium of communication.

- **Section two: Cross-cultural Communication**

Q1: what does culture mean to you?

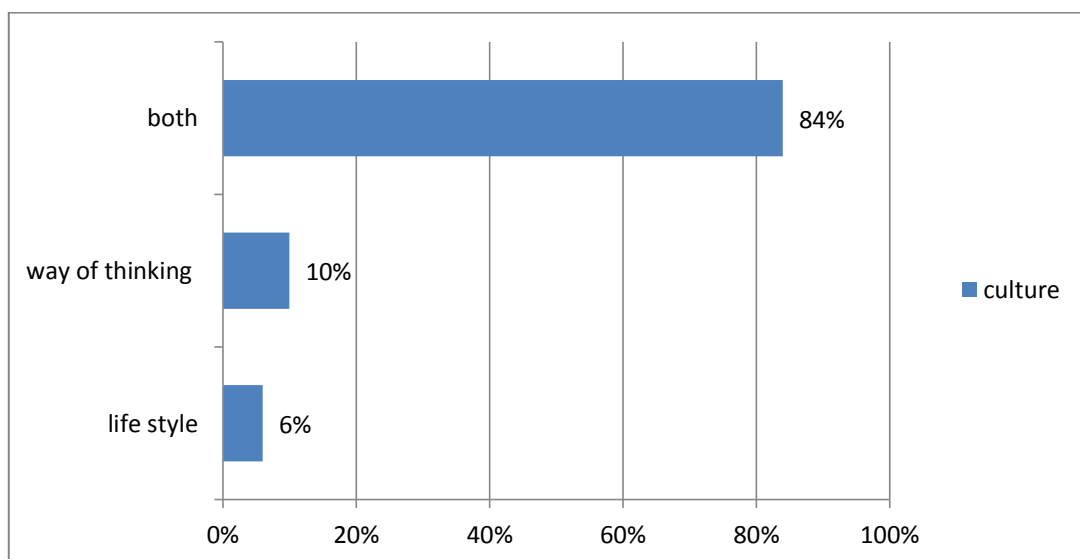**Figure 5: Students' Perception of Culture**

The figure 5 above shows that the vast majority (80%) of the students perceived culture as both a way of thinking and a style of life. The rest were divided into two categories: a part of them (10%) claimed that culture is a way of thinking, and the other parts (6%) saw culture as a life style. The outcomes of this figure indicate that the majority of the participants

have a correct view about culture as being not only one aspect, either way of living or a way of thinking, but the correlation of both.

Q2: Do you think it is important to learn about other cultures?
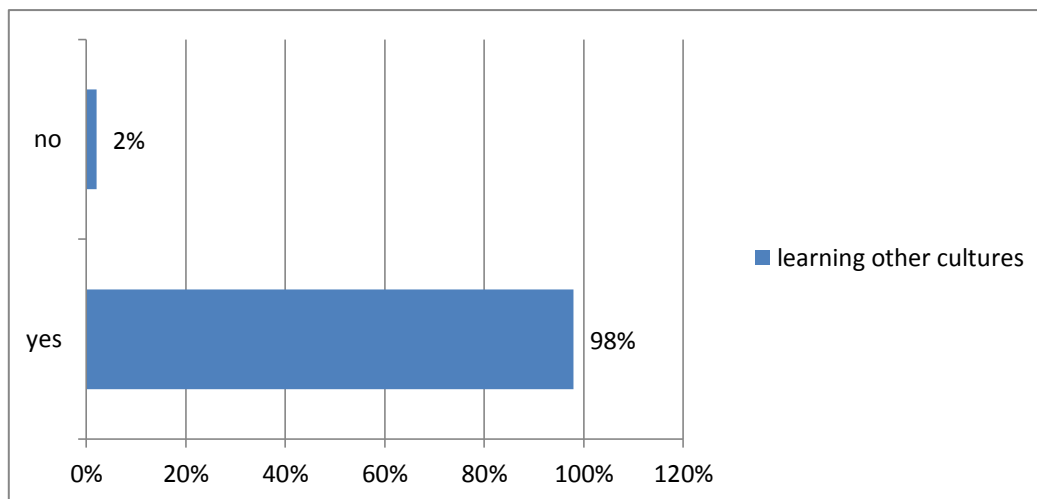
Figure 6: The Importance of Learning about other Cultures

In the figure 6.Almost all the students (98%) agreed that learning about other cultures is very important, and only (2%) of them ignored its importance. Since our population comprises English language students, these results can be the outcome of the students' awareness of the very important role of culture in learning a foreign language, and that culture has a great impact on both the form and the meaning of language.

Q3: Have you been, or are you in contact with members of other cultures?
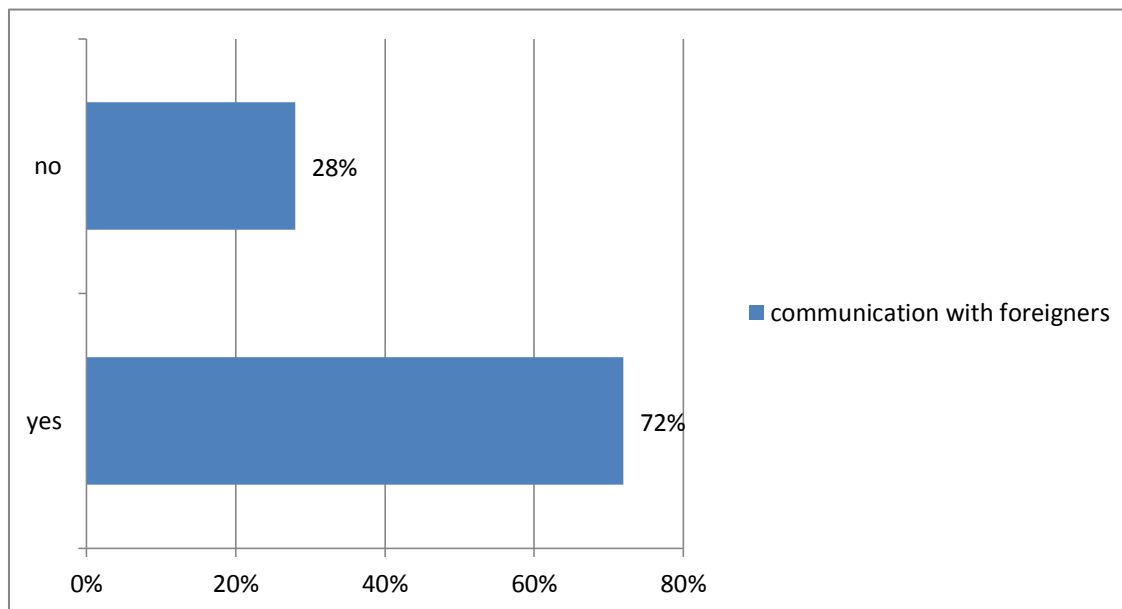
Figure 7: Students' Contact with People from other Cultures

As shown in figure 7.(72%) of students were in contact with people from other cultures and a small proportion (28%) were not. This means that almost all the students in our sample are interested in interacting with people from other cultures. This can be, as the previous question indicated, due to the fact that these students are foreign language students, and learning the language is the purpose behind this interaction.

Q4: if yes, When interacting with people from other cultures, which language do you use?
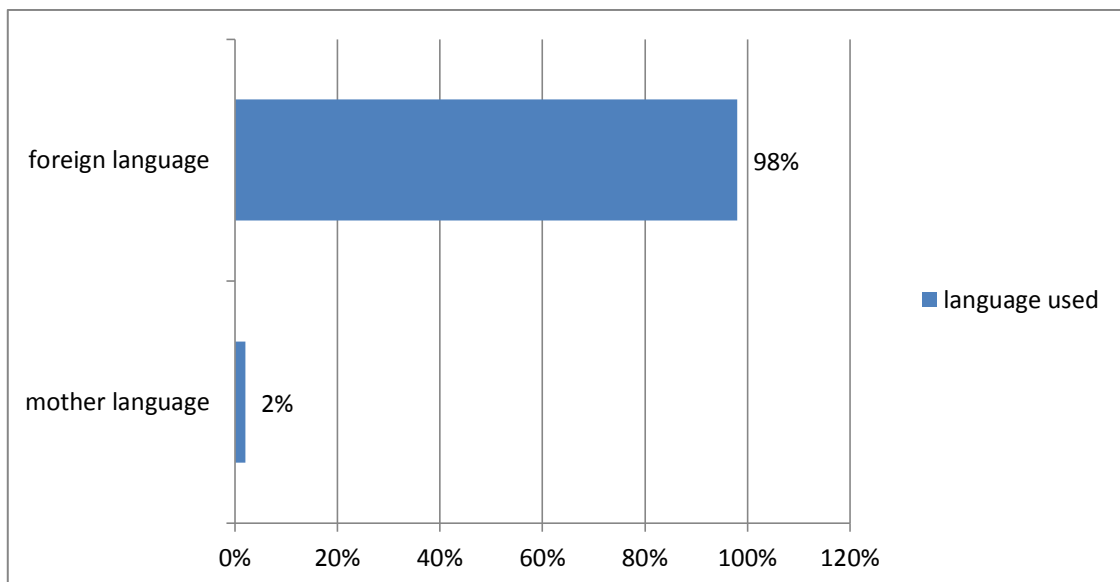
Figure 8: the Language used by the Students in Interacting with Foreigners

Figure 8 shows that almost all the students (98%) used a foreign language while interacting with people from other cultures, and only (2%) of them claimed that they use the mother tongue. This use of foreign language reinforces their language learning and encourages openness to the world and other cultures.

Q5: Do you confront any difficulties in communicating with them?
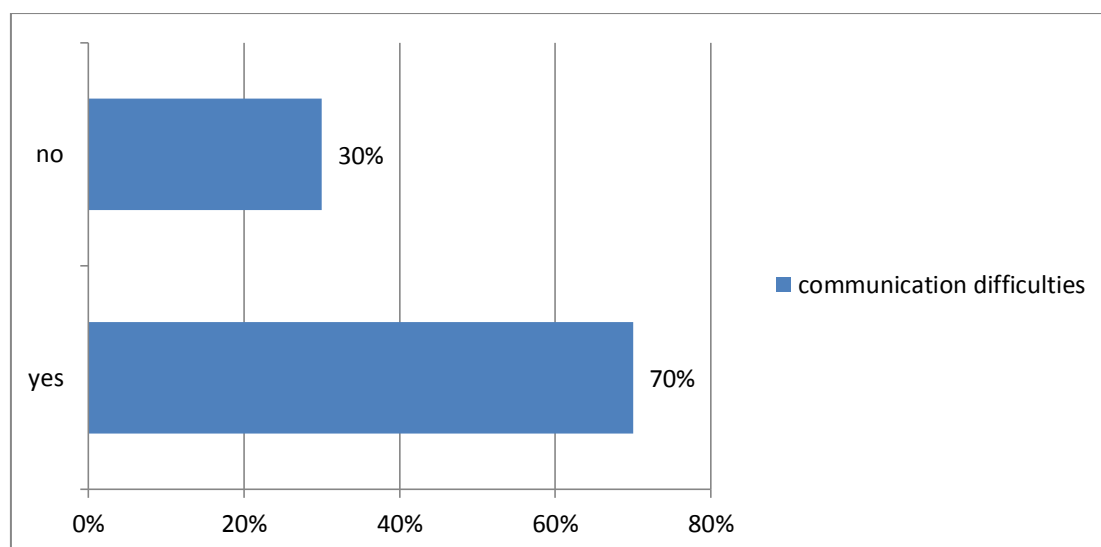
Figure 9: the Difficulties Confronted by Students in Communicating with Foreigners

From the figure 9 we notice that a lot of students (70%) said that they face some kind of difficulties when interacting with members of other cultures, while the rest (30%) claimed that they have no problems in this kind of communication. This means that communicating cross-culturally is seldom trouble free.

Q 6: If yes, what are the obstacles that may interfere with your communication with members of other cultures?
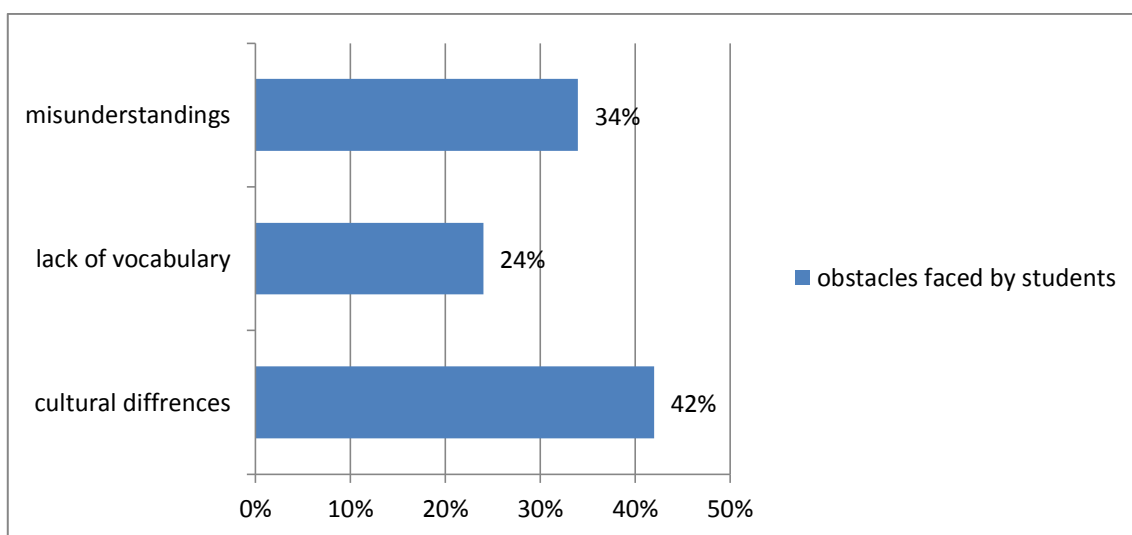
Figure 10: Types of Obstacles Faced by Students

Our sample's answers varied according to the three choices we gave them as demonstrated by figure 10. None of them suggested any additional options. 42% of the students said that the cultural differences are the main cause of communication problems. 24% of our sample traced the reason behind their communication problems to the lack of vocabulary. The rest (34%) said that misunderstandings are the factors behind such problems. It is clear why a lot of students chose the cultural differences to be the main obstacle in communication. The differences in the cultural norms, behaviors, and especially religious beliefs can cause a lot of disputes and conflicts between the communicators. The students' choice of lack of vocabulary and misunderstandings as an obstacle can be related to their use

of the foreign language instead of their mother tongue, although misunderstandings can be due to cultural differences, as well.

Q7: How do you feel when you face these obstacles?
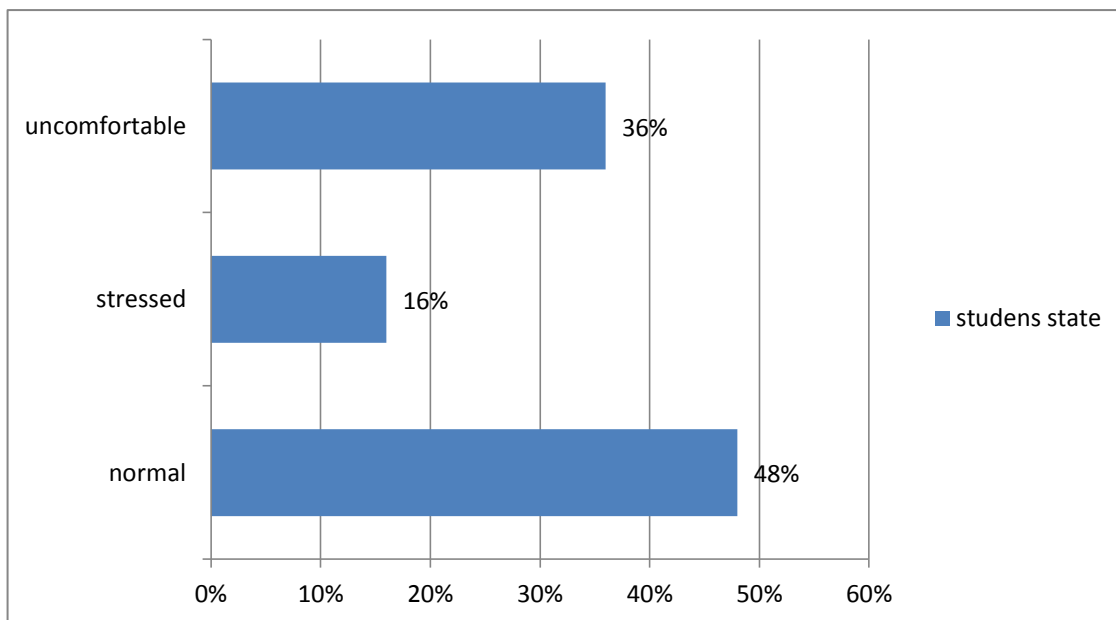
Figure 11 : Students' Stance when facing Communication Problems

Figure 11 represents the psychological state of students when some obstacles occur in a conversation with foreigners. Almost half of students (48%) felt normal about it, while the other half felt either stressed (16%), or uncomfortable (36%).

- **Section three: Social Networks and Cross-cultural Communication**

Q1: Do you have a regular access to the internet?
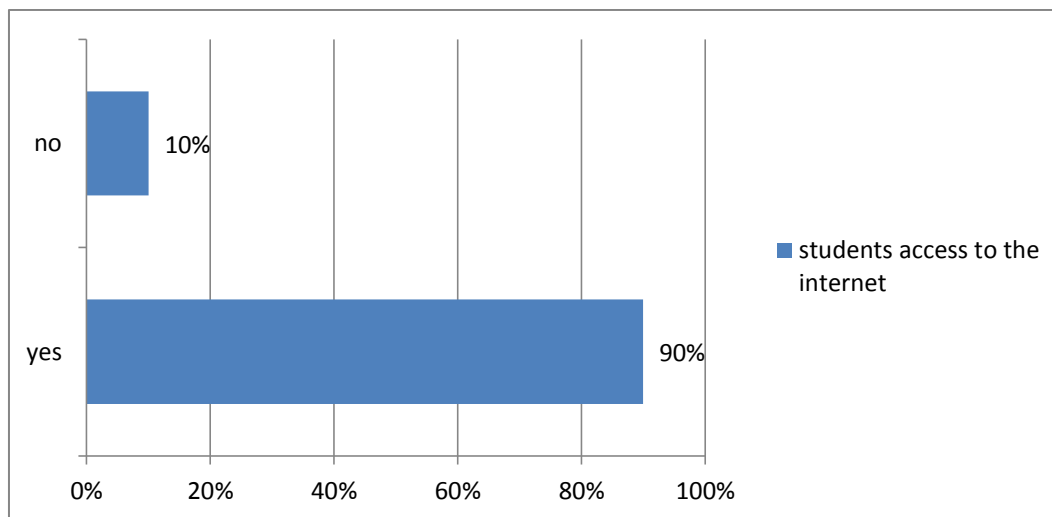
Figure 12: Students' Accessibility to the Internet

The data in figure 12 show that the majority of our sample (90%) had a regular access to the internet while only (10%) of them did not. The students' accessibility to the internet determines whether they are able to communicate with members of other cultures or not, because the internet is the most common tool for today's communication across cultures. From the figure, we can notice that most of the students are able to access the internet, and that's why a lot of them claimed to engage in communications with foreign people previously.

Q2: Are you familiar with social networks?
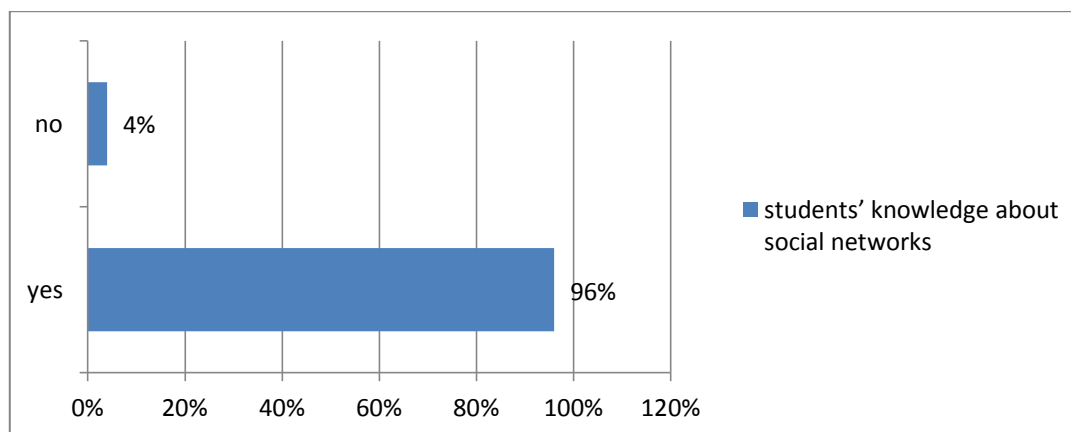
Figure 13: Students' Familiarity with Social Networks

The findings, according to figure 13, reveal that the vast majority (96%) of students were already aware about the existence of social networks. Only (4%) of the students claimed that they don't know about them. Being the kind of websites that allow for interaction between people, social networks have a huge popularity among the users of internet. This explains why almost all of the students know them.

Q3: If yes, how often do you use them?
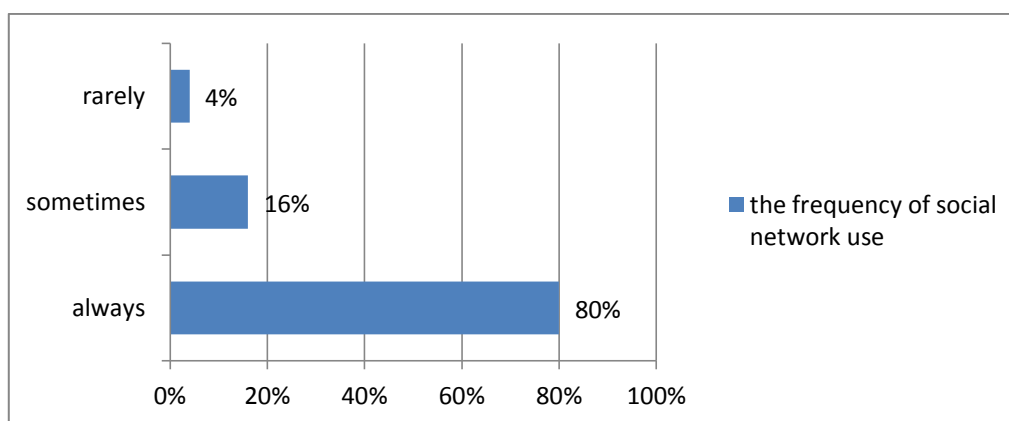
Figure 14: the Frequency of Students' Use of Social Networks

In figure number 14. The majority of the population (80%) claimed that they use social networks always; others (16%) said that they use them sometimes; the rest of them (only 4%) used social networks rarely. The results demonstrate that social networks became a part of students' daily life.

Q4: What kind of social networks do you use the most?
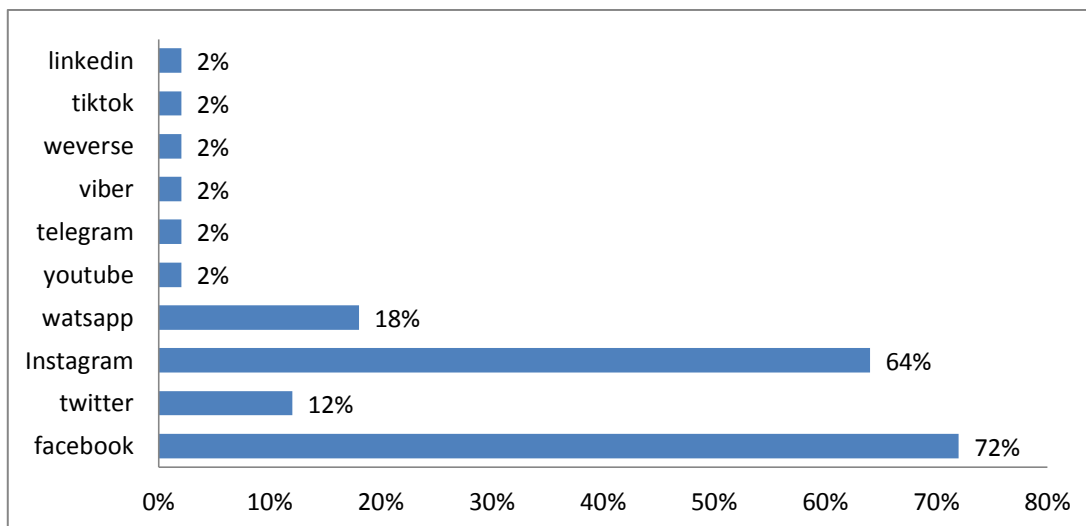
Figure 15: Most used Social Networks by Students

From the figure 15, we can clearly see that Facebook and Instagram were the most used social networks by students, while other websites came after these two by in smaller proportions such as twitter, Watsapp, YouTube…etc. These results indicate that the most visited websites by the students are those that are mainly used for communication and provide the best features to facilitate it.

Q5: For which purpose do you use social networks?
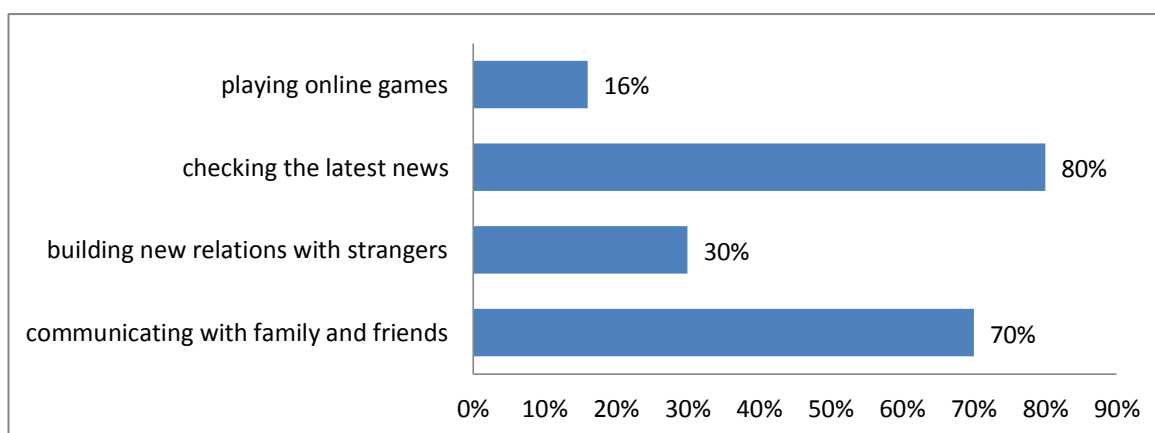
Figure 16: The Main Purpose behind Students' Use of Social Networks.

From the figure above, we can see that the use of social networks for checking the latest news (80%) and communicating with friends (70%) comes as the main interests of students. Building new relations with strangers (30%) and playing online games (16%) were a least favorite option for using social networks. From these statistics, we can say that the students' tendency to using social networks for checking the latest news is the result of the rapidity and exclusivity of transmitting the news, while the choice of using social networks for communicating with family and friends is simply because these websites are designed mainly for communication.

Q6: Do you find using social networks beneficial? Justify.
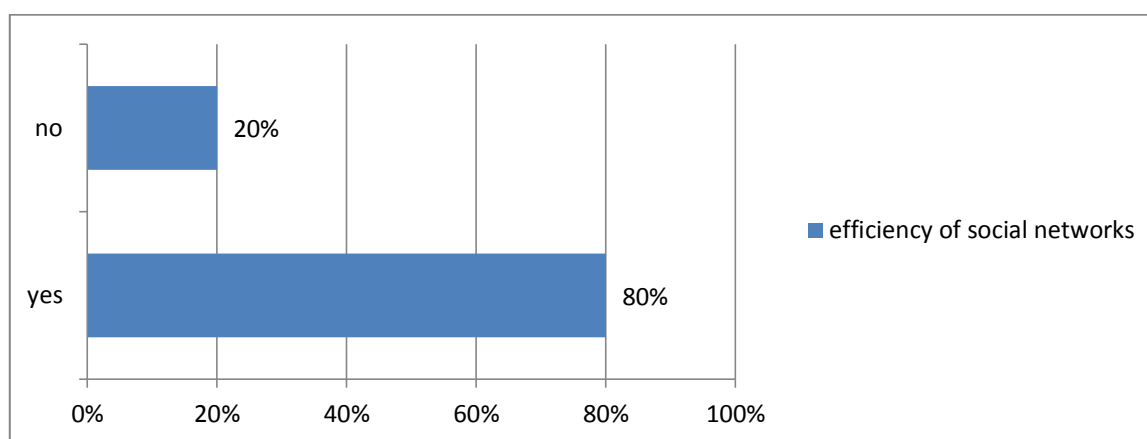
Figure 17: Students' Opinion about the Efficiency of Social Networks

From figure 17 we can see that the majority of our sample (80%) claimed that social networks are beneficial to them, the rest of students (20%) said that those social networks are not. From the results, we can figure out that students may have various uses of social networks in their daily life which reflected on their answers by claiming their efficiency.

The students who said "yes" justified their answers by arguing that social networks help them communicate easily with many persons even from far away, which makes the world as a small village. They also argued that social networks are beneficial because they

make them always updated and help them check the latest news. They also gave some other benefits like developing vocabulary, watching videos related to different domains, learning about almost everything, and understanding more about other cultures. The students who answered with "no" justified their answers by claiming that social networks are just a waste of time if they are used in a wrong way, and they can cause addiction if used excessively.

Q7: Do you use social networks to communicate with members of foreign cultures?
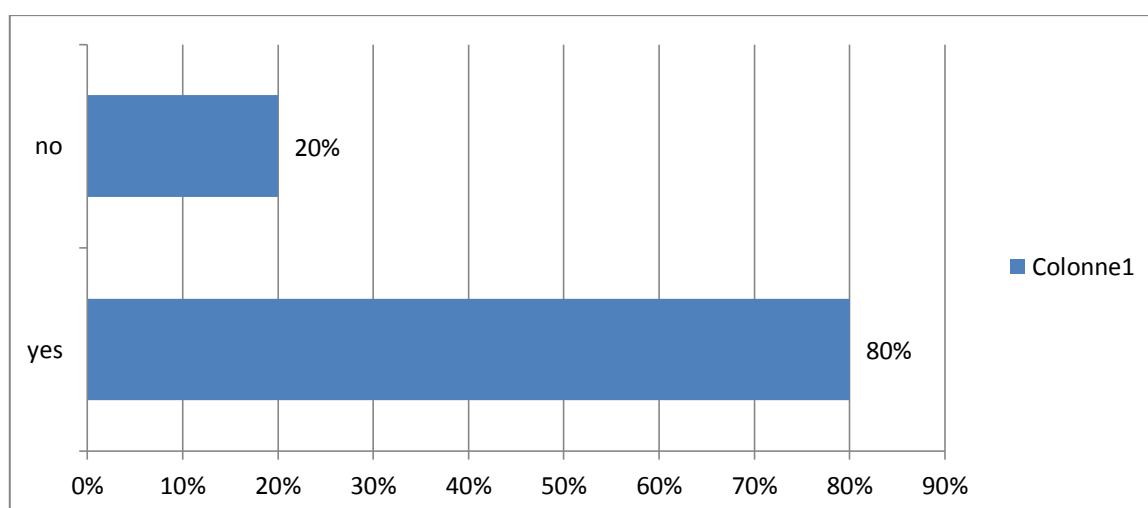
Figure 18: the Students' Use of Social Networks in Cross-Cultural Communication

Figure 18 demonstrates that (80%) of our population said that they use social networks in their communication with foreigners and only (20%) claimed that they do not use it for such a purpose. The fact that social networks facilitate communication and raise students' awareness of the benefits of communicating with people from different cultures can be the reason why most of them engage in such kind of interaction.

Q8: Does the use of social networks to communicate with foreigners make it easier, harder, or like face to face communication? Explain.
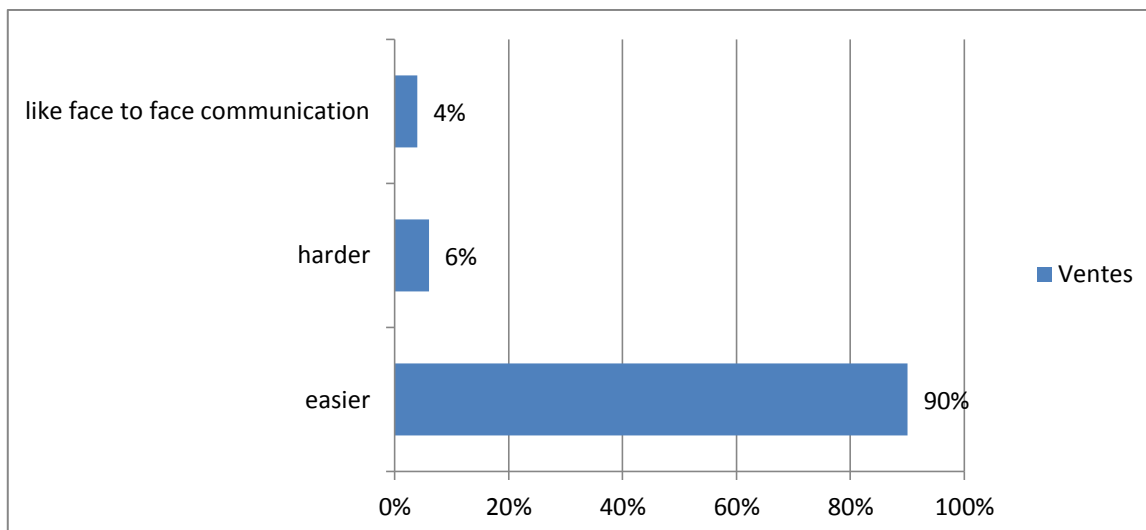
Figure19: the Role of Social Networks in Communication with Members of other Cultures

Figure 19 denotes that dominant percentage (90%) of the whole sample believed that communication with members of other cultures through social networks is easier than the other ordinary ways. The rest of the students believed that communication through social networks makes it either harder (6%) or is no different from the face to face communication (4%).

Students whose answers were in favor of using social networks to make communication with foreign people easier explained:

- Social networks enable people to interact with each other without a need to travel.
- Social networks are easy to use even with limited technology knowledge.
- Most of the time, people communicate in social networks using written language, this reduces the stress, shyness, or awkwardness that may occur in a normal conversation.
- Social networks give the chance to think about the message before sending it.

For the rest of the students, they explained their answers by claiming that communication needs some face to face gestures to make it understandable.

Q9: Do you believe that social networks play a role in the development of communication across cultures. Explain.
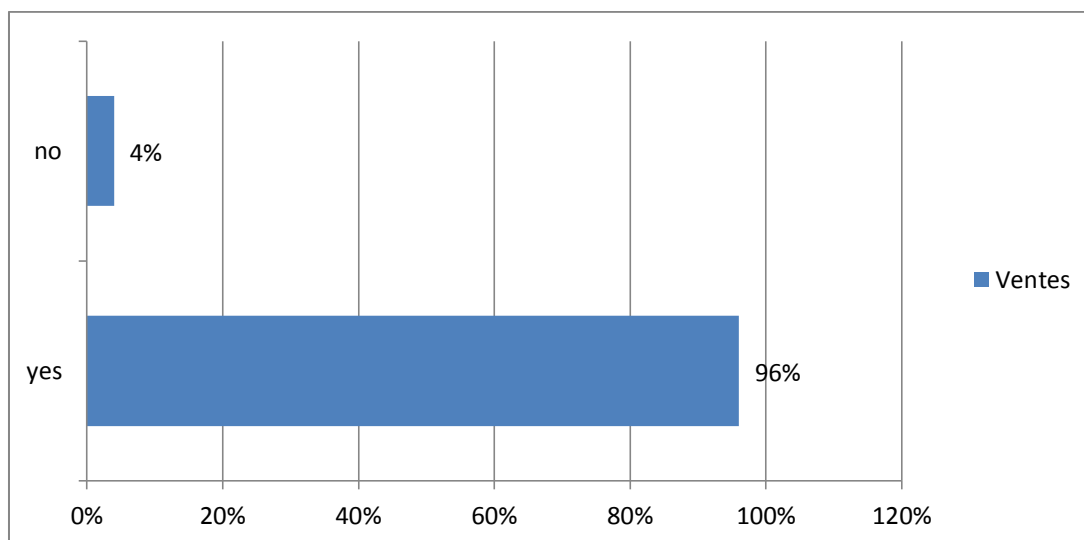
Figure 20: Students' Perception towards the Role of Social Networks in the Development of Cross-Cultural Communication

Figure 20 shows that the overwhelming majority (96%) of students believed that social networks have a role in developing cross-cultural communication. In justification, they argued by saying that social networks make the communication across cultures easy and lead people to be open to new views, beliefs, and learn how to accept that what is different is not always bad. They also added that social networks help to learn about the other cultures such as: their way of communication, their way of life, their norms, and what is acceptable or not for them. The rest of the students (4%) claimed that social networks have no role in developing cross-cultural communication.

Q10: Which of the following aspects do you think social networks develop in situations of cross-cultural communication?
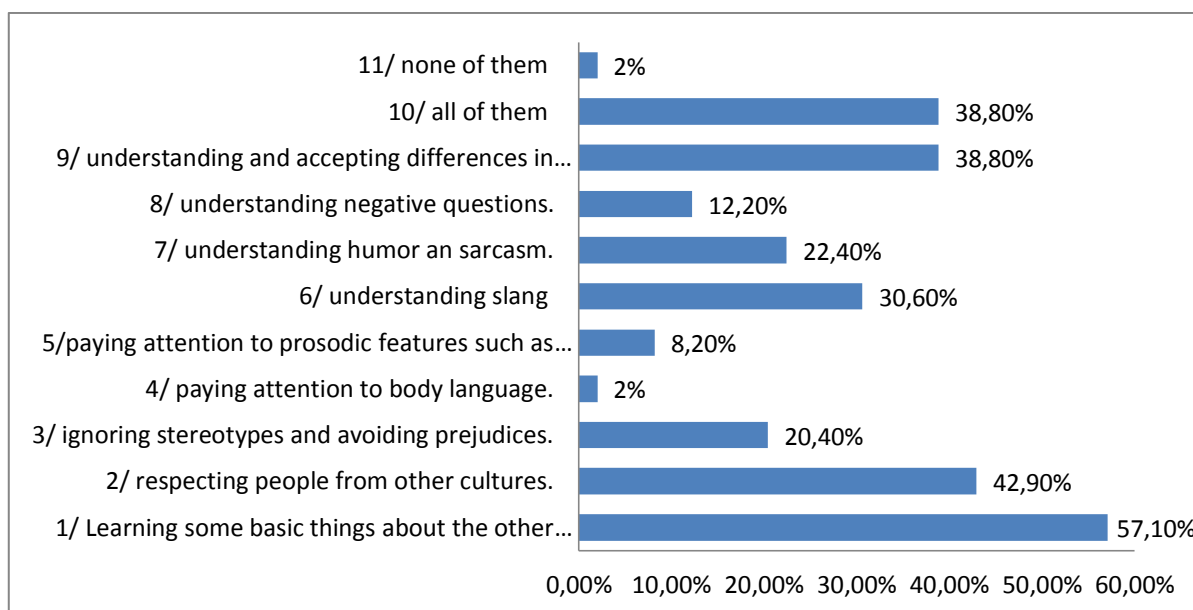
Figure 21: The Aspects that Social Networks Develop in Cross-Cultural Communication

Figure 21 denotes that "learning some basic things about the other culture" stood as the most aspect chosen by students (57.1%) when it comes to the social networks' effect on cross-cultural communication. Coming in the second place was "the respect of others cultures" option by a percentage of (42.9 %). It's clear also that the proportions are close between "understanding slang" (30.6%) , "understanding and accepting differences" (38.8%), and the choice of "all of them" (38.8%). "Ignoring stereotypes and prejudices" (20.4%), "paying attention to prosodic features"(8.2%) , "understanding humor and sarcasm"(22.4%) and "understanding negative questions"(12.2%) came in fewer percentages. Only (2%) of the participants chose "paying attention to body language" and the option "none of them".

From these results, it is clear that students believe that social networks can enhance their knowledge about the other cultures and shape their behaviors towards them by learning how to respect their people. It is also clear that almost none of the students chose "paying attention to body language" because communication through social networks happens in its written form most of the time, involving no gestures.

Q11: Do you think that is important to include the use of social networks in education to improve students' cross-cultural communication?
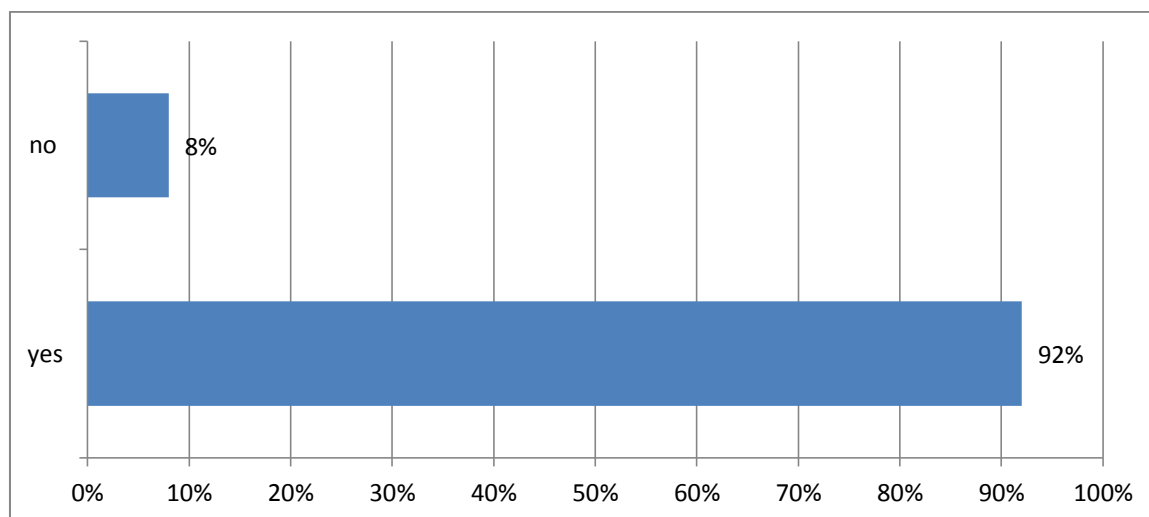
Figure 22: Students' Perceptions towards the use of Social Networks in Education to Improve Cross-Cultural Communication

Most of the students (92%), according to the figure 21, claimed that social networks can be a helpful tool in improving cross-cultural communication when implemented in education while only (8%) saw that it is not. The results imply that the students are aware of the potential benefits of the social networks if implemented in education.

2.2.2. Discussion of the Students' Questionnaire

The analysis of the students' questionnaire aims at discovering their perceptions about social networks' role in enhancing cross-cultural communication. The questionnaire was submitted to 50 students of English language at Mila University Centre and they were selected randomly.

The students' questionnaire was divided into three sections. The first one deals with the student gender, age, and the English level. The results show that females are outnumbered males which may cause a bias in our results, so more researches are recommended in this field

of investigation. The ages of students are ranged between 18-47 years and the majority of them are between 22-24 years old. The results also show that the majority of the students are satisfied about their level in English.

The second section aims to collect information from our sample about their knowledge of culture and communication across cultures. The obtained results show that the students have a good understanding of the concept of culture and the importance of learning about other cultures, as well. This explains why a large proportion of the sample is already in contact with foreigners, yet they still face obstacles and problems in such kind of cross-cultural communication.

In the third section, the students were asked about social networks and their role in cross-cultural communication. The results show that students consider social networks to be very beneficial and that's why they are used excessively and for various reasons by the majority of the sample. It is confirmed that students have positive perceptions about the use of social networks in enhancing cross-cultural communication since they have agreed that this kind of websites helps in enhancing cross-cultural communication and improving different aspects of communication across cultures. Fewer students have an opposite opinion because either they had a negative view about the use of social networks in general, or because they consider social networks to be not sufficient for improving all the aspects of communication.

So, the findings obtained from the analysis of students' questionnaire provide a preliminary confirmation of the hypothesis that social networks help in enhancing cross-cultural communication.

2.2.3. Teachers' Questionnaire Analysis

A questionnaire of fourteen questions was given to teachers of English at Mila University Center. The responses were analyzed as follows.

- **Section One: General Information**

Q1: What is your professional degree?
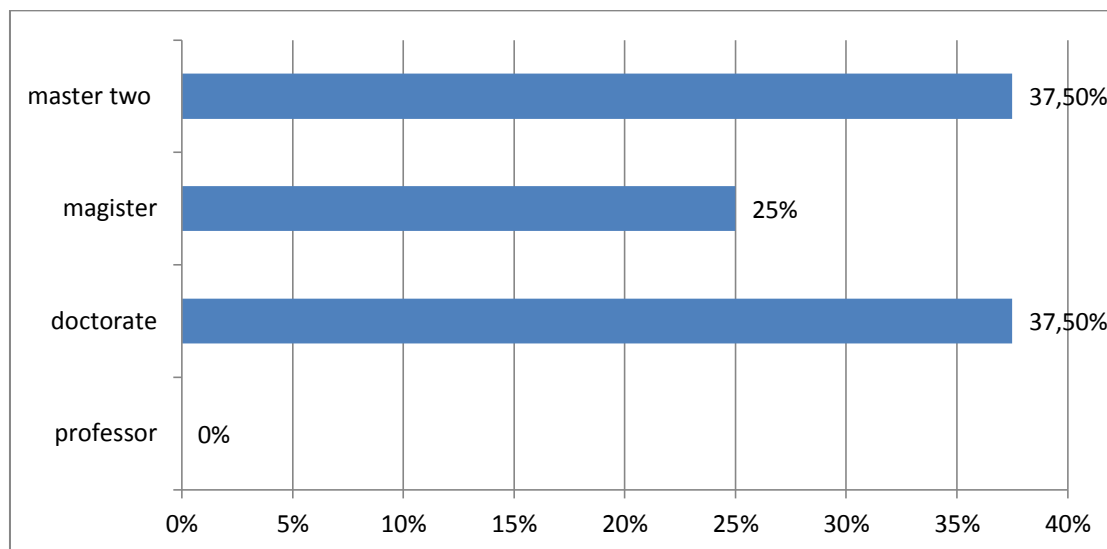
Figure 23: Teachers' Professional Degree

The figure 23 denotes that most of the teachers held either a master two (37.5%) or a doctorate degree (37.5%); the rest of them had a magister degree (25%) and no teacher was a professor. It is, thus, assumed that all teachers are highly qualified and able to teach English at the university.

Q2: For how long have you been teaching?
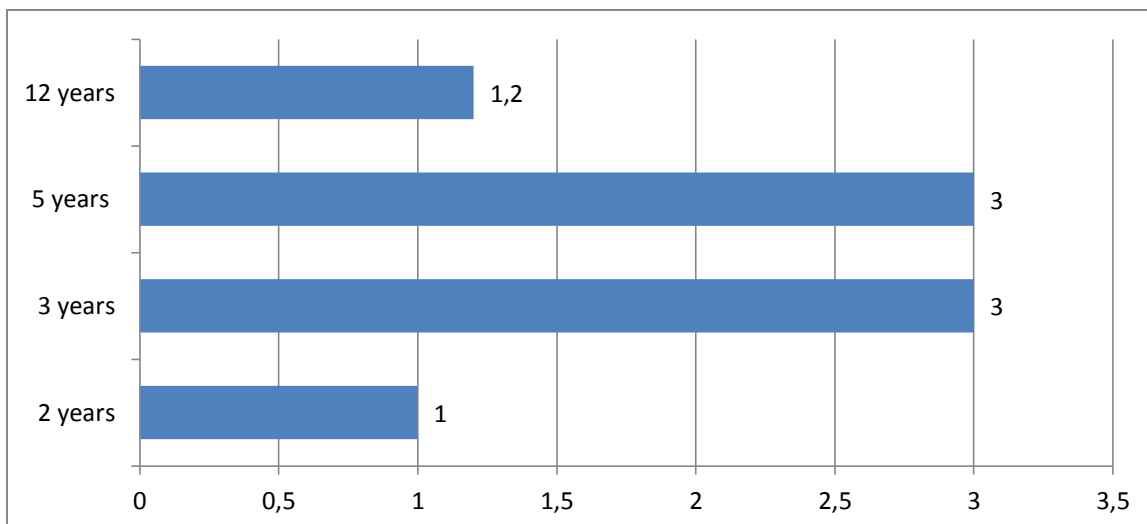
Figure 24: Teachers' Experience in Teaching

Figure 24demonstrates that majority of teachers in the sample have been teaching for a period of time ranged between three years (36%) to five years (37%). The rest of teachers have been teaching for either two years (12%) or 12 years (15%). The results show that most of teachers in the sample do not have a long experience in teaching, but since they are from a new generation, they are more likely to have a good knowledge about technology and its use.

Q3: What courses do you teach, and to which level of students?
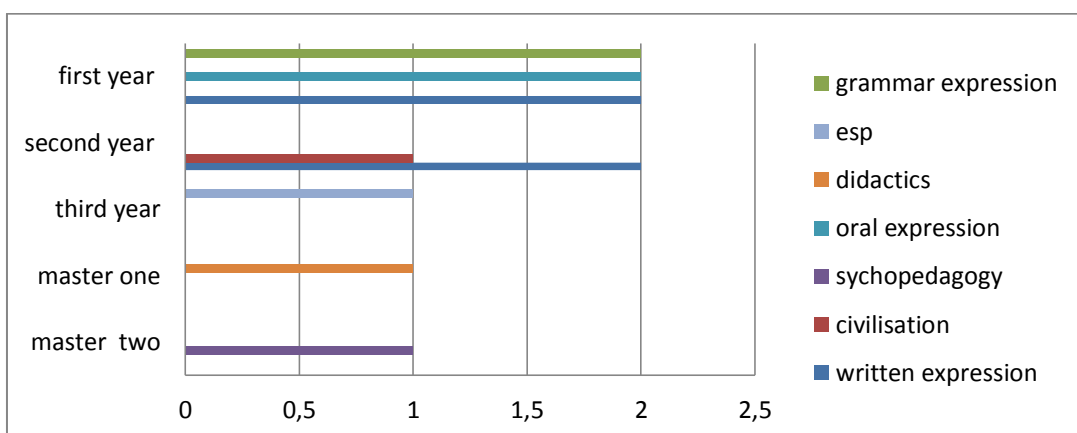
Figure 25: The Modules and Levels Taught

Figure 25 shows that the teachers in our sample are teaching different levels from first year to master two. The modules that they teach include: ESP, didactics, oral expression, psycho-pedagogy, grammar, oral expression, civilization, and written expression. All these modules involve a basic understanding of the foreign culture, and possibly permit cross-cultural communication.

- **Section two: Cross-Cultural Communication**

Q1: In your opinion, what is the significance of teaching a foreign culture?
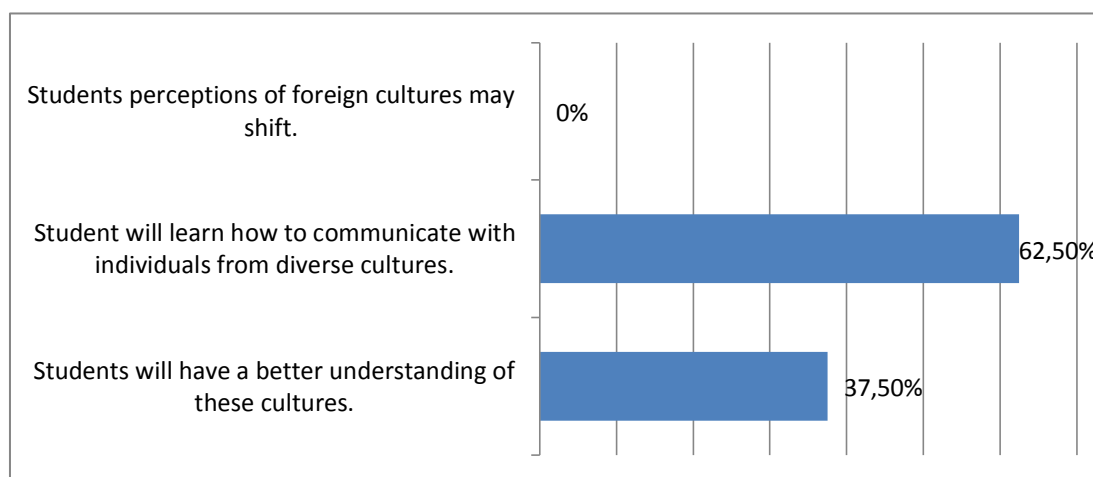
Figure 26: Teachers' Perceptions about the Significance of Teaching Foreign Culture

The figure 26 denotes the percentages of teachers' responses as to the significance of teaching the foreign culture. The majority of the respondents (63%) chose that teaching the foreign culture helps in learning how to communicate with members of those cultures. The rest of them (37%) said that teaching the foreign culture can enhance students' understanding of this culture.

The results confirm the strong relationship between culture and communication as most of the teachers chose "communicating with foreigners" as the main purpose behind teaching a foreign culture.

Q2: Do you consider teaching the skills of communication across cultures important?
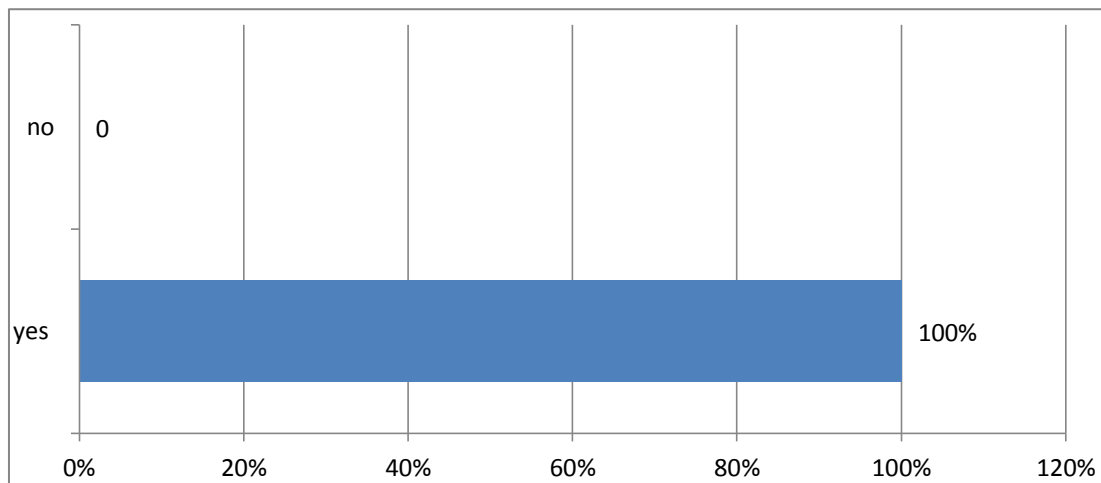
Figure 27: The Importance of Teaching the Skills of Communication across Cultures

From the figure 27, it's clear that all teachers in the sample (100%) agreed that teaching the skills of communication across cultures is important. Communication across cultures is a very important skill for students of foreign language, so that, it is deemed a necessary part of teaching it.

Q3: In your opinion, what are the advantages of improving cross-cultural communication?
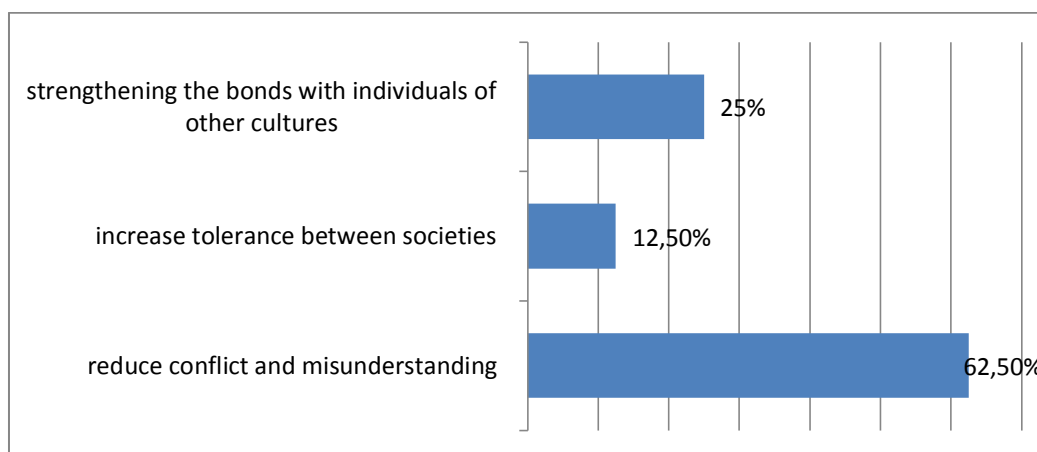
Figure 28: Advantages of Improving Cross Cultural Communication

As displayed by figure 28, over a half of the teachers (62%) in the sample said that reducing conflict and misunderstanding is the main advantage of improving cross-cultural communication. The rest of them claimed that improving cross-cultural communication either increases tolerance between societies (13%), or strengthens the bonds with individuals of other cultures (25%). All in all, cross-cultural communication results in undeniable impacts.

- **Section Three: Social Networks**

Q1: Do you use any kind of social networks in your classes?
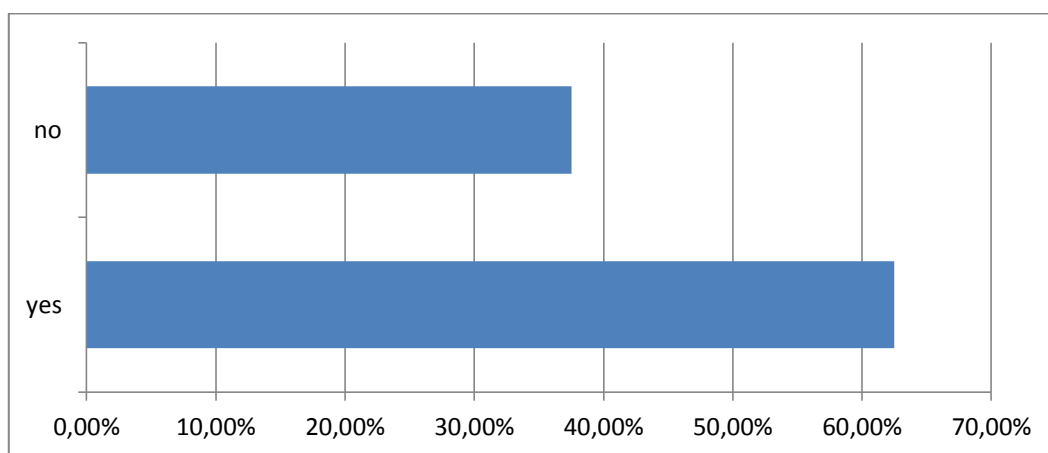
Figure 29: Teachers' use of Social Networks in their Classes.

Figure 29 demonstrates the percentage of teachers who used social networks in their classes (62.5%), and those who did not use them (37.5%). The fact that most of the teachers in our sample use some kind of social networks in their classes gives an idea about the effectiveness of social networks in teaching.

Q2: If yes, what social network websites do you use?
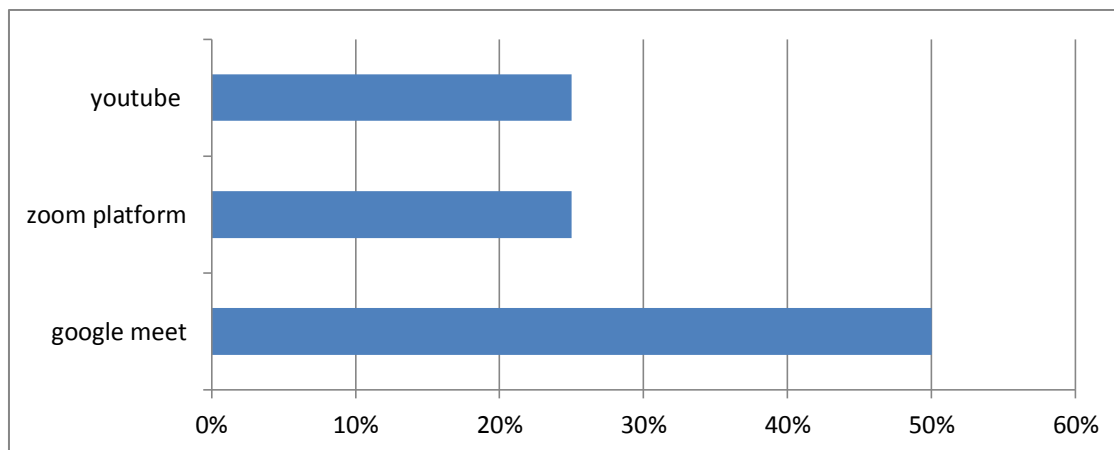
Figure 30: Social Networks Websites used by Teachers

Figure 30 shows the types of social networks used by the participant teachers in this study, which are: Google meet (50%), Zoom platform (25%), and YouTube (25%). The websites that are used most by the teachers are mainly those which offer the possibility to communicate with students in virtual spaces.

Q4: Do you consider using social networks in teaching beneficial? Justify.
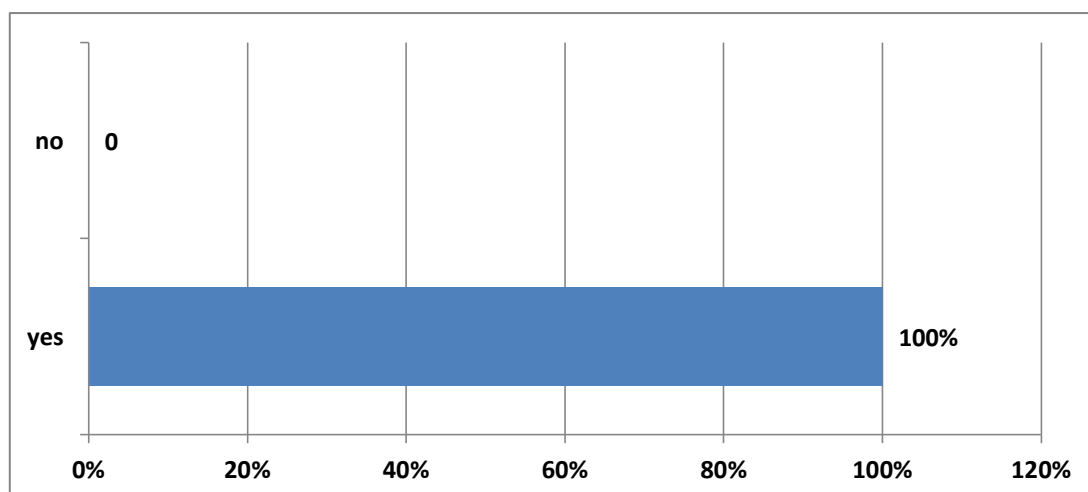
Figure 31: Teachers' Opinion about the Use of Social Networks in Teaching

Figure 31 demonstrates that all the teachers in the sample agreed about the idea that social networks are beneficial when it comes to teaching. They justified their opinion by

claiming that social networks have the potential to facilitate communication between teacher and learner. Social networks are also suitable for the students because they are entertaining and interesting for them.

Q5: What do you think students use social networks for?
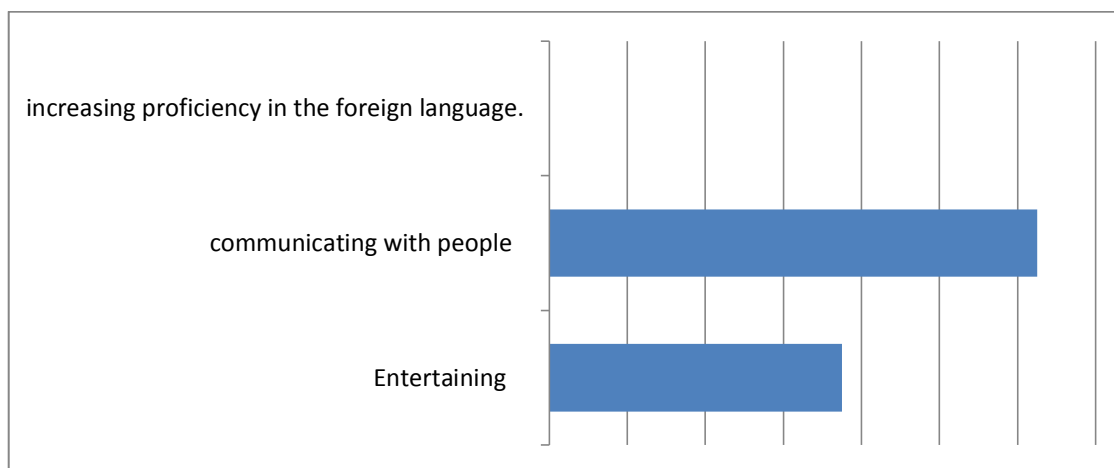
Figure 32: Students' use of Social Networks according to Teachers

From figure 32 above, it can be noticed that "communicating with people" is the primary use of social networks by students according to teachers in the sample with a percentage of (62.5%), the rest of them thought that students use those websites in order to have fun and entertainment.

- **Section four: The relation between Social Networks and Cross Cultural Communication**

Q1: Do you think that social networks can help to enhance cross-cultural communication?
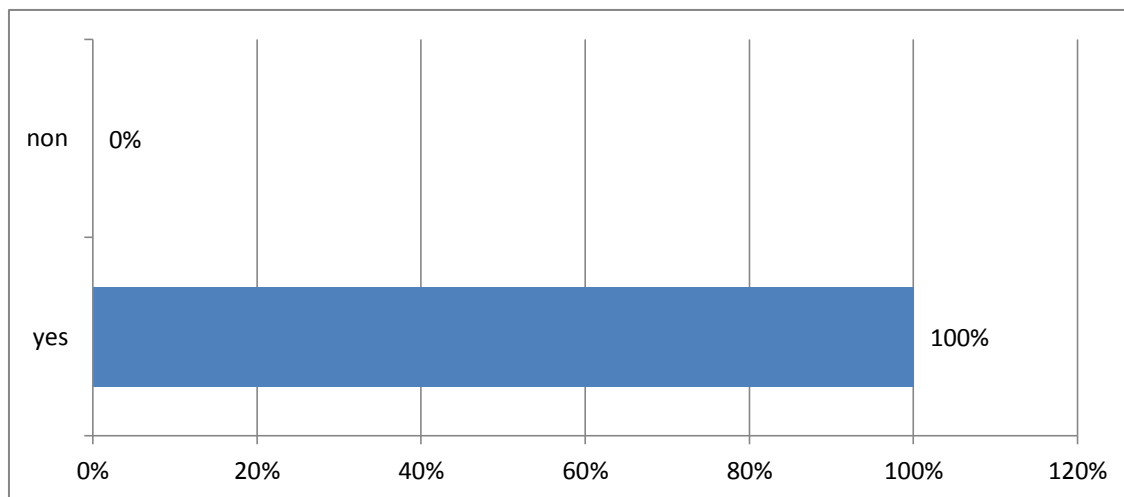
Figure 33: Teachers' perceptions towards using Social Networks in enhancing Cross Cultural Communication.

From figure 33, it is clear that all the teachers in the sample (100%) agreed that social networks can help to enhance cross-cultural communication. This is perhaps due to the possibility such networks offer for communicating with foreigners in short time and with less energy.

Q2: Which of the following aspects do you think social networks help develop in situations of cross-cultural communication?
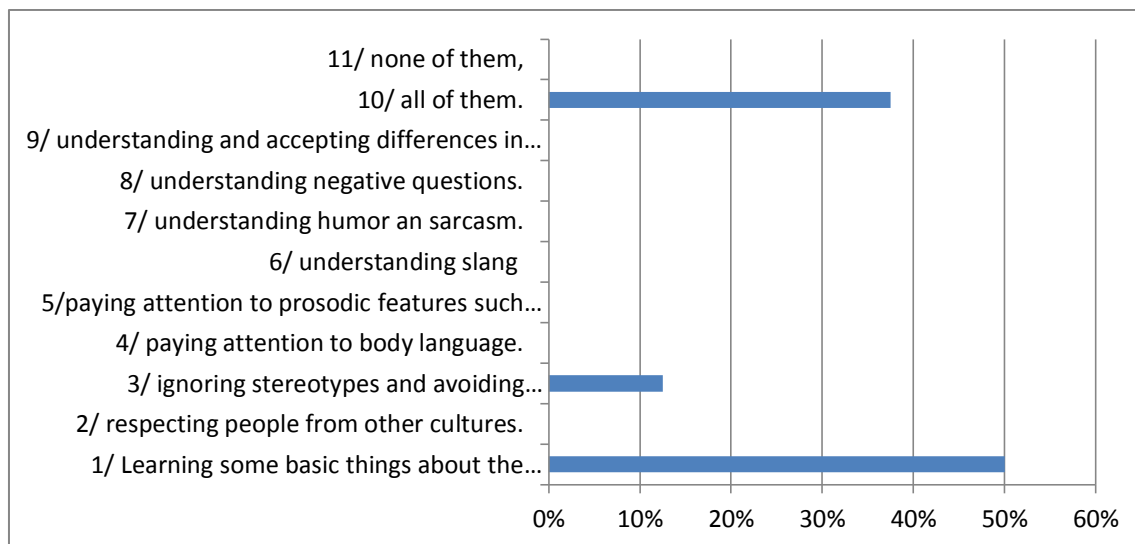
Figure 34: Aspects that Social Networks improve in Cross-Cultural Communication according to Teachers

Half of the teachers in the population (50%) agreed about the idea that social networks can help the users to learn some basic things about other culture. (37.5%) said that social networks improve all the aspects of communication across cultures, while only 12.5% of the sample claimed that social networks can improve the ignorance of stereotypes and the avoidance of prejudices. From these results, it is clear that the main aspect that can be developed through the use of social networks in cross cultural communication is the ability to learn some basic concepts about the other cultures.

Q3: Is it enough to depend on social networks to help students develop cross-cultural communication skills?
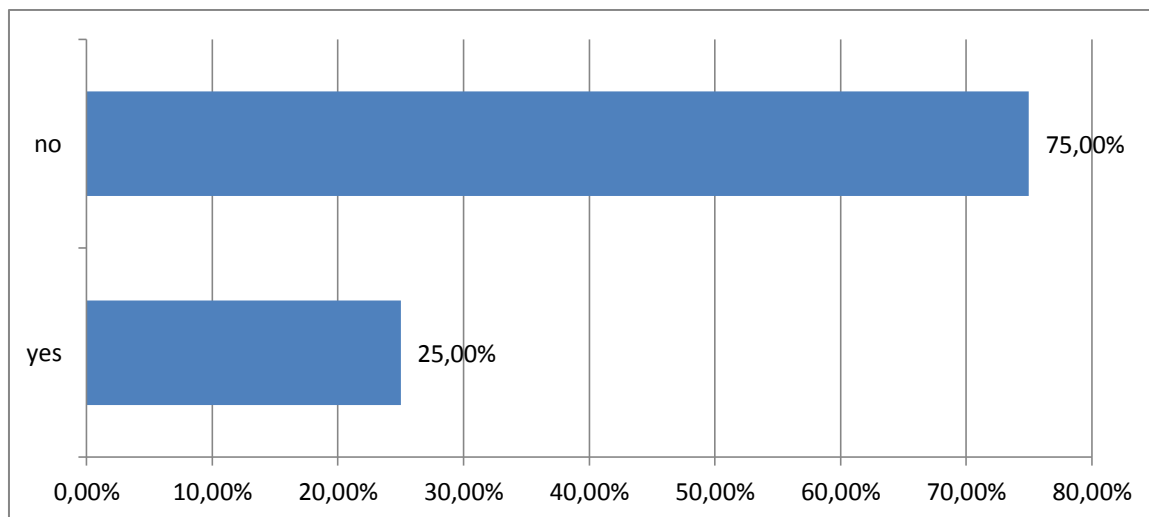
Figure 35: Teachers' opinion about the Satisfaction by the use Social Networks in Developing Cross Cultural Communication

As shown in figure 35, the majority of the teachers in the sample (75%) saw that social networks cannot be a sufficient tool in developing cross cultural communication. They justified their answers by claiming that social networks are very helpful when it comes to developing communication across cultures, but they do not include all the aspects of communication that a person needs in a conversation. Teachers also preferred to depend on more authentic sources like books. The rest (25%) of the sample assumed that social networks are enough for developing cross-cultural communication.

2.2.4. Discussion of the Teachers' Questionnaire

Like the students' questionnaire, the teachers' questionnaire provides some insights about their perceptions of the role of social networks in enhancing cross-cultural communication. The questionnaire was answered by 8 teachers of English language at Mila University Centre. It was divided into four sections. The first one was designed to collect some general information about the teachers.

The second section aimed at investigating the teacher's opinion about the importance of cross-cultural communication and its development. The results illustrate that teachers have

agreed on the significance of learning about other cultures and the importance of teaching the skills of cross-cultural communication because of the positive effect this kind of skills have on communication.

The third section dealt with teachers' perception of social networks and their use in education. The results indicate that the teachers consider social networks to be a beneficial tool in facilitating the process of teaching and learning, and that was clear from their use of these websites in classes and their opinion about the different aspects which social networks can be implemented in to develop education.

The last section is about the relation between social networks and cross-cultural communication. Teachers believe that social networks have an important role in enhancing cross-cultural communication by developing some of the aspects needed in this type of communication such as: learning some basic things about other cultures, ignoring stereotyping, and avoiding prejudices…etc. Even though teachers agreed on the importance of social networks when it comes to cross-cultural communication, they still see that there are some missing aspects when relying solely on them to develop cross-cultural communication. So, they prefer to depend on more authentic sources in teaching cross-cultural communication.

In their entirety, the results show that teachers have a positive view about the importance of using social networks to enhance cross-cultural communication and its ability in developing different aspects of communication with people of foreign culture, but they still perceive social networks as a limited instrument of developing cross-cultural communication in terms of the components of communication which they cover. So, in addition to other resources, students must use social networks as a complementary tool in developing cross-cultural communication.

Conclusion

This last chapter focuses mostly on our research area. Using two questionnaires, one for students and the other for teachers, we attempted to investigate the role of social networks in enhancing cross-cultural communication. The results gathered from the analysis show that social networks can help in enhancing different aspects of cross-cultural communication.

General Conclusion

This study was designed to investigate the students' and teachers' perceptions towards the role of social networks in improving cross-cultural communication. It also attempts to discover whether or not social networks can develop the students' cross-cultural communication, and if yes, which aspects can be developed using such social networks.

This descriptive study used a mixed methodology, with questionnaires given to both teachers and students in order to gather both qualitative and quantitative information from a sample of fifty students and eight teachers. The analysis of the data clearly indicate that both students and teachers have positive views towards the use of social networks as the latter have an effective role in enhancing students' cross-cultural communication in several aspects. These aspects include: learning some basic things about the other cultures (food, clothes, arts, architecture, tourism, traditions...etc.), respecting people from other cultures, ignoring stereotypes and avoiding prejudices, paying attention to body language, paying attention to prosodic features such as intonation, stress, tone..etc., understanding slang, understanding humor and sarcasm, understanding negative questions, and understanding and accepting differences in showing politeness. However, it is worth mentioning that even though teachers acknowledge the potential of social networks in improving such cross-cultural communication skills, they also point out that they need to be accompanied by more authentic materials, and their use needs professional instruction to achieve the set aims of cross-cultural communication.

- **Recommendations for EFL teachers**

At the end, and on the basis of the study's main findings we may suggest the use of social networks in EFL classes whenever the objective is to raise awareness of and to shed light on cross-cultural communication. This may take the form of designing tele-collaborative

projects, for example, which make use of social networks to communicate with foreigners in order to reach particular pedagogical aims set by the teachers. The use of such projects guarantees making the best use of social networks which is to communicate with people from different cultures on the one hand, and it offers the chance to reach pedagogical aims set by the teachers through guided tasks, on the other hand.

- **Limitations of the Study**

This study faced a number of limitations:

1-   The teachers and learners were not collaborative and the majority of them ignored our questionnaires.

2-   Many teachers and learners skipped justifying their answers when the explanations are required.

3-   The restriction of time.

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Appendices

Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

This study will look into the effect of social networks in improving cross-cultural communication. As a result, you are kindly requested to respond to this questionnaire in order to study your perspective on the matter. Your responses are critical to completing this study. Thanks in advance.

Section one: general information

1-What is your gender?

-Male   ☐

-Female   ☐

2-how old are you?

……..........…………

3-how do you evaluate your level in English?

-Very good   ☐

-Good   ☐

-Average   ☐

-Low   ☐

Section two: cross-Cultural communication

1-What does culture mean to you?

- Life style (customs, food, traditions...etc.) ☐

-A way of thinking (beliefs, ideas, values...etc.) ☐

-Both ☐

If others, mention them:

....

2- Do you find it important to learn about other cultures?

- Yes ☐

- No ☐

3-Have you been, or are you in contact with member of other cultures?

- Yes ☐

- No ☐

4- if yes, when interacting with people from other cultures, which language do you use?

-Your mother language ☐

-The foreign one (English, French...etc.) ☐

5-Do you confront any difficulties in communicating with them?

-Yes ☐

-No   ☐

6-if yes, what are the obstacles that may interfere with your communication with members of other cultures?

Cultural differences   ☐

Lack of vocabulary   ☐

Misunderstandings   ☐

Others:

....

7- how do you feel when you face these obstacles?

-normal   ☐

-stressed   ☐

-uncomfortable   ☐

Section three: social networks

1-Do you have a regular access to the internet?

-Yes   ☐

-No   ☐

2-are you familiar with social networks

-Yes   ☐

-No ☐

3- if yes, How often do you use them?

-Always ☐

-Sometimes ☐

-Rarely ☐

4-What kind of social networks do you use the most?

-Facebook ☐

-Twitter ☐

-Instagram ☐

-YouTube ☐

-Watsapp ☐

-others:

…………………………………………………………………………………………………….

5-Do you find using social networks beneficial?

-Yes ☐

-No ☐

-justify:

....

6- For Which purpose do you use social networks?

-Communicating with family and friends   ☐

-Building new relations with strangers   ☐

-Checking the latest news   ☐

-Playing online games   ☐

7-Do you use social networks to communicate with members of foreign culture?

-Yes   ☐

-No   ☐

8- does the use of social networks to communicate with foreigners makes it :

-easier   ☐

-harder   ☐

-like face to face communication   ☐

Explain:

………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………

9-do you believe that social networks play a role in the development of communication Across cultures?

-Yes ☐

-No ☐

Explain your point of view:

....

10- which of the following aspects do you think social networks develop in situations of cross-cultural communication?

1/ learning some basic things about the other cultures (food, clothes, arts, architecture, tourism, traditions...etc.)

2/ respecting people from other cultures

3/ ignoring stereotypes and avoiding prejudices

4/ paying attention to body language

5/ paying attention to prosodic features such as intonation, stress, tone..etc.*

6/ understanding slang

7/ understanding humor and sarcasm

8/ understanding negative questions

9/ understanding and accepting differences in showing politeness

10/ all of them

11/ none of them

11-do you think that is important to include the use of social networks in education to improve the students cross cultural communication?

- Yes

- No

Teachers' questionnaire

Dear teachers,

You are kindly asked to answer this questionnaire. Your answers are so important for completing this research, and we would appreciate receiving your responses.

Thanks in advance.

Section one: general information

1-what is your professional degree?

Professor ☐

Doctorate ☐

Magister ☐

Master two ☐

2-how long have you been teaching?

....

3-what courses do you teach, and to what level of students?

....

Section two: cross-cultural communication

1-In your opinion, what is the significance of teaching a foreign culture?

-Students will have a better understanding of these cultures ☐

-students will learn how to communicate with individuals from divers cultural

backgrounds ☐

-students perceptions of foreign cultures may shifts ☐

Other:

....

2-do you consider teaching skills of communication across cultures important?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Justify please

....

3-in your opinion, what are the advantages of improving cross-cultural communication?

Reduce conflicts and misunderstandings ☐

Increase tolerance between societies ☐

Strengthening the bonds with individuals of other cultures ,☐

Others

....

Section three: social networks

1-do you use any kind of social networks in your classes

Yes ☐

No ☐

2-If yes, what social network website do you use?

....

3-Do you consider using social networks in teaching beneficial?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Pleasejustify

....

4-what do you think students use social networks for?

Entertaining ☐

Communicatingwithpeople ☐

Increasingtheir proficiency intheforeignlanguage ☐

Others

....

Section four: relation between social networks and cross cultural communication.

1-do you think that social networks can help to enhance cross-cultural communication?

Yes ☐

No $\quad$ ☐

2-which of the following aspects do you think social networks develop in situations of cross-cultural communication?

1/ learning some basic things about the other culture (food, clothes, arts, architecture, tourism, traditions...etc.)

2/ respecting people from other cultures

3/ ignoring stereotypes and avoiding prejudices

4/ paying attention to body language

5/ paying attention to prosodic features such as intonation, stress, tone..etc.*

6/ understanding slang

7/ understanding humor and sarcasm

8/ understanding negative questions

9/ understanding and accepting differences in showing politeness

10/ all of them

11/ none of them

3-is it enough to depend on social networks to help students develop cross-cultural communication skills?

Yes $\quad$ ☐

No $\quad$ ☐

Justify

....

الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التحقيق في تصورات معلمي وطلاب اللغة الإنجليزية تجاه دور الشبكات الاجتماعية في تعزيز التواصل الثقافي. تشير الفرضية التي اقترحناها إلى أن استخدام الشبكات الاجتماعية سيؤدي إلى تعزيز التواصل بين الثقافات. تم إجراء البحث في مركز جامعة ميلة باستخدام استبيانين تم إعطاء أحدهم الى ثمانية (08) مدرسين للغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية في الجامعة والآخر تم توجيهه إلى خمسين (50) طالبًا. حيث كشف استبيان الطلاب أن استخدام الطلاب للشبكات الاجتماعية له تأثير كبير على أدائهم الثقافي المتبادل وتطورات الجوانب المختلفة للتواصل عبر الثقافات. كما أثبتت الدراسة استعداد الطلاب لإدماج استخدام الشبكات الاجتماعية في التعليم لتطوير التواصل الثقافي للطلاب. أظهر استبيان المعلمين من ناحية أخرى أيضًا أهمية استخدام الشبكات الاجتماعية في تطوير جوانب معينة من الاتصال. و بالإضافة إلى ذلك، يعتبر المدرسون أن استخدام الشبكات الاجتماعية في التعليم مفيد للطلاب، ولكنه أداة تكميلية لأنه لا يغطي جميع جوانب الاتصال بشكل عام، لدى كل من الطلاب والمعلمين تصور إيجابي حول استخدام الشبكات الاجتماعية لتعزيز التواصل الثقافي.

كلمات مفتاحية : التواصل بين الثقافات، الشبكات الاجتماعية، دور، تعزيز، تصورات المعلمين والطلبة.

Résumé

Cette étude vise à étudier les perceptions des enseignants d'anglais et des apprenants quant au rôle des réseaux sociaux dans l'amélioration de la communication interculturelle. L'hypothèse que nous avons suggérée indique que l'utilisation des réseaux sociaux permettrait d'améliorer la communication interculturelle. La recherche a eu lieu au Centre universitaire de Mila en utilisant deux questionnaires l'un a été donné à huit (08) professeurs d'anglais à l'Université et l'autre a été adressée à cinquante (50) étudiants. D'une part, le questionnaire des élèves a révélé que l'utilisation des réseaux sociaux par les élèves a un grand impact sur leur performance interculturelle et sur l'évolution des différents aspects de la communication entre les cultures. Il a également prouvé que les apprenants étaient prêts à intégrer l'utilisation des réseaux sociaux dans l'éducation pour développer la communication interculturelle entre les élèves. D'autre part, le questionnaire des enseignants a également démontré l'importance d'utiliser les réseaux sociaux pour développer certains aspects de la communication. En outre, les enseignants considèrent que l'utilisation des réseaux sociaux dans l'éducation est utile pour les étudiants, mais comme un outil complémentaire car il ne couvre pas tous les aspects de la communication. En général, les étudiants et les enseignants ont une perception positive de l'utilisation des réseaux sociaux pour améliorer la communication interculturelle.

Les mots clés : communication interculturelle, réseaux sociaux, rôle, amélioration, perceptions des étudiants et des enseignants