# Examining the Vocabulary Knowledge and Idiomatic Structures of EFL Learners in a Culturally - Oriented Learning Context

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**Abstract**

This study looked into how cultural background knowledge affected the vocabulary and idiomatic phrases of Saudi pre-intermediate EFL students. Only 60 out of 100 EFL students who conducted the Oxford Quick Placement Test for this reason were chosen. Group 1 (American Culture; AC), Group 2 (Saudi Culture; SC), and Group 3 (Culture-Free; CF) were created by randomly selecting the responses. After that, each group was pre-tested on vocabulary and idioms. The groups' respondents were then given three different treatments. For the treatment, the SC group received instruction on 10 texts related to Saudi traditions and culture; the AC group received instruction on 10 texts containing vocabulary and idiomatic structures pertinent to the American culture; and the CF group received instruction on 10 texts that were culture-free but still contained some phrases and idiomatic structures. The data collected were examined and analyzed employing one-way ANOVA in addition to paired sample t-test following the instruction, which was broken up into 10 sessions of 60 minutes each. According to the findings, the AC and SC groups outperformed the CF group. Further, there was a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test of the SC, with Sig (.00) < 0.05, suggesting that teaching English vocabulary and idioms from the Saudi culture had a substantial impact. Finally, the results also showed that there was a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test of the AC group as Sig (.00) < 0.05, suggesting that teaching English vocabulary and idioms from the American culture had an influential impact on the participants. There are several ramifications of this study for instructors, and curriculum designers.

**Keywords:** culture-based materials, idiomatic structures, language and culture, linguistic culture, sociolinguistics

## 1. Introduction

Language and culture are so closely related that they are often used interchangeably (Keall, 2013). From one perspective, language serves as a medium for the social considerations, beliefs, and communication of people. However, culture is included in the language itself (Bettega, 2018). Language and culture are intertwined (Frank, 2015; Keall, 2013; Bettega, 2018). These two ideas naturally overlap, making it difficult to draw a distinction between them; they are of equal significance (Abdulaal, Alenazi, Tajuddin, & Hamidi, 2022; Setyono & Widodo, 2019; Liu, 2019).

Language and cultural context serve as a communication function by transferring meaning. For language speakers to form communications, language has a responsibility to communicate syntactical, semantic, and pragmatic functions (Knowles & Kramsch, 1995; Keall, 2013; Bettega, 2018). Language and other behavioral characteristics often convey cultural meaning. Understanding culturally varying standards of behavior as well as people's values and beliefs is crucial for effective communication across languages and cultures (Stigler, Gallimore, & Hiebert, 2000; Knowles & Kramsch, 1995). When used in different cultural contexts, linguistically suitable statements might cause misunderstanding and confusion (Supovitz, & Turner, 2000).

Cultural background, which is a part of the content system, is necessary knowledge for understanding a text. According to numerous studies, a reader's skill to comprehend the passages may be considerably influenced by their familiarity with the relevant cultural issues (Freedman, 2000; Supovitz, & Turner, 2000). The cultural scheme is a method for recreating a passage's meanings by utilizing associated cultural scripts (Aiello & Thurlow, 2006). Language shows a person's fundamental and distinctive style of thinking, along with cultural knowledge and information. As a result, culture affects even the most fundamental speech acts (Grimshaw, 1998; Aiello & Thurlow, 2006); it is fundamental to our way of life and the way we use linguistic forms.

Idiomatic structures are a crucial component of every linguistic system. Idioms are prevalent and can be found in all languages (Swinney & Cutler, 1979). Native speakers (NSs) typically use idiomatic expressions without taking into account their metaphorical meaning. NNSs

frequently have trouble understanding idioms because they do not fully comprehend the basis on which the idiomatic term is based. The English NSs frequently employ idiomatic expressions. It is a crucial component of the English vocabulary system. Thus, idiomatic structures are seen as inevitable in English NNSs. NNSs should therefore become familiar with these expressions. English NNSs must learn and use idiomatic expressions in the same way as NSs do, and educational material must incorporate them (Bobrow & Bell, 1973; Swinney & Cutler, 1979; Abdulaal & Abuslema, 2020; Moradkhani & Asakereh, 2018).

Knowing the target culture can help EFL students learn more vocabulary. A crucial component of EFL is the acquisition of English vocabulary (Drew & Holt, 1988). Learning other abilities and sub-skills requires first mastering vocabulary. Vocabulary acquisition is crucial, according to Tight (2010), because it serves as a key gauge of linguistic proficiency. The processes of learning any foreign language will be hampered by a lack of lexical components because vocabulary knowledge is fundamental to language learning. EFL and ESL students may not attain desirable language learning objectives if they lack sufficient lexical knowledge (Melville, Gryc, & Lawrence, 2009). According to Elman (2009) and Tight (2010), EFL learners' ability to communicate authentically is severely hampered by their lack of lexical expertise. Therefore, it is conceivable that EFL students require suitable lexical knowledge. Consequently, the purpose of this study was to address the following research questions taking into account the aforementioned points:

1. Does cultural awareness significantly affect the vocabulary knowledge of Saudi pre-intermediate EFL learners?

2. Does cultural awareness significantly affect the idiomatic expressions understanding of pre-intermediate EFL learners?

3. What is the correlation between cultural awareness and language proficiency?

## 2. Review of Literature

### 2.1 Cultural Context and Lexical Learning

Cultural fusion is viewed by many researchers and academics as an essential component of acquiring the English language (EL) (Ambady, Koo, Lee, & Rosenthal, 1996; Love, 2009). To put it another way, improving EFL learners' cross-cultural communication skills to effectively interact with native speakers from other cultural backgrounds, is one of the main justifications for teaching foreign and second languages in modern times (Celce-Murcia, 1991; Ambady, Koo, Lee, & Rosenthal, 1996; Love, 2009; Abdulaal, Abuslema, Hal, Amer, & Altohami, 2023).

According to Lysiuchenko (2021), communicative skills are not adequate without cultural knowledge, which is defined as understanding and information received not only about the culture but also from it (Pinxten, 1992; Celce-Murcia, 1991). Indeed, this understanding enables us to examine our cultural viewpoints and evaluate them against those of our interlocutors. The most significant materials for cultural teaching are still textbooks, despite the fact that observations, short stories, poetic works, biographies, and images are regarded as rich sources.

Nahrkhalaj (2012) created two classes for the textbooks used for English language instruction and learning in one categorization.

1. Textbooks created internationally: Such textbooks are frequently created by native book designers and utilized worldwide with a focus on trans-cultural topics; as a result, these books (like Interchange and Connect Books) do not take their readers' cultural concerns into account.

2. Locally generated books are typically designed by non-native speakers in accordance with the local curricula made available via a particular nation's Ministry of Education. These textbooks attempt to acquaint EFL and ESL students with the cultural background of the foreign language to support them in developing a cross-cultural recognition taking into account the cultures of both the mother tongue and the foreign language by providing cultural knowledge about L1 and the L2 (Namaziandost, Tavakoli, & Izadpanah, 2021).

According to Yuen (2011), English textbooks employed internationally must be culturally diverse to support learners' meaningful and communicative language acquisition. There is a perception that most EFL textbooks, which are typically thought of as globally produced publications, focus mostly on American and English cultural elements (Shin, Eslami, & Chen, 2011; Yuen, 2011). This means that several textbooks available in colleges and bookstores are designed only from the views of English native writers, who are monocultural; non-native speakers and their local cultures have really been neglected (Roshan, 2014; Chen, 2011; Yuen, 2011; Namaziandost, Tavakoli, & Izadpanah, 2021).

In order to educate students and help them become competent communicators in a variety of communication situations, EFL and ESP textbooks are expected to cover a wide range of themes and intercultural texts today (Aldera, 2017; Shin, Eslami, & Chen, 2011; Yuen, 2011). Learning English terms and idiomatic expressions can be made simpler for EFL students by becoming familiar with British culture (Insuasty & Ibarra, 2022).

Schema theory is an important cultural theory. Kant made the initial proposal for the schema theory. Schema theory originated thanks to Kant's discovery. German psychologist Kant first used the word "schema" in 1781. He asserted that learners' prior knowledge made up the schema, which he termed an active evolving pattern that implied ongoing concept construction. He believed that by evoking the reader's past knowledge, schema may help the reader fill in the blanks in the text (Abdulaal, Khalil, Alenazi, & Wodajo, 2022).

The schema is described as dynamic and self-checking (Sweller, 1994). Such characteristics imply that schema significantly affects how cognitive learning is processed. These characteristics imply that schema significantly affects how cognitive learning is processed. Schemas support our ability to analyze and handle problems. A schema is a grouping of intellectual data that has been abstracted. The perception

process, which is centered on a psychological schema of a student's previous knowledge, is described by psychologists using schema theory. As a result of vocabulary training, it helps students motivate their mental background knowledge and, in the end, understand the knowledge they currently possess (Alzubi, Al-Mwzaiji, & Nazim, 2023).

More crucially, since poor word knowledge in a foreign language impedes effective communication, having a strong vocabulary is often seen as a significant skill for EFL and ESL students. According to Williams (1994), Nahrkhalaj (2012), Namaziandost, Tavakoli, and Izadpanah (2021), lexical knowledge is substantial for communicative proficiency and EFL learning. According to Caro and Mendinueta (2017), Williams (1994), and Nahrkhalaj (2012), the relationship between lexical competence and linguistic use is mutually reinforcing: lexical knowledge promotes language use, while language use promotes an increase in lexical knowledge. In and out of the classroom, vocabulary's importance is constantly demonstrated. Successful students in a class have a broad and comprehensive lexical knowledge.

In the EL, idiomatic expressions—often referred to as idioms—abound and are used regularly. The EL is said to have 25,000 or so idiomatic expressions. Both formal and informal English talks frequently use idiomatic expressions (Cieślicka, 2006; Williams,1994; Nahrkhalaj, 2012). On the other side, it has been demonstrated that NNSs of English are unable to use idiomatic expressions. NNSs lack the ability to use idiomatic language and understand its connotations, in contrast to English NSs. This is a problem with NNSs' English proficiency, and it is considered a gap in their language-learning process. Ambrose asserts that comprehension of the English vocabulary entails more than just being aware of the terms' referential definitions. Idioms fit into this last category of words since they demand that their users understand figurative language and connotative word knowledge. Idiomatic expressions can have unpredictably different meanings, which linguists are aware of. In other words, idioms only have meaning by happenstance.

According to a linguistic theory, the meanings of idiomatic expressions change at random (Owens, 1996). But according to recent research, a lot of idioms can be explained and don't have arbitrary meanings. Many factors contribute to the meaning that idiomatic idioms convey. Idioms, in the opinion of Owens (1996), are not random characteristics of a language. Students will become more aware of the meanings of idiomatic structures and be able to memorize them if they are instructed that they have non-arbitrary sense. (Titone & Connine, 1999; Cieślicka, 2006; Williams, 1994; Nahrkhalaj, 2012). Instead of instructing pupils to learn idioms by heart, which is difficult, it would be more useful to teach them in a methodical way. In this sense, it can help make idiomatic statements simpler to learn and recall. NNSs gain an understanding of the culture of speakers of that language in this way by using idiomatic terms (Mendinueta, 2017; Williams, 1994). Therefore, if English learners are familiar with idiomatic expressions and their meanings, they will be better able to comprehend English culture (Titone & Connine, 1999; Cieślicka, 2006; Williams,1994; Nahrkhalaj, 2012).

*2.2 Previous Analyses*

Some academics, such as Landau, Smith, and Jones (1988), have recognized the importance of lexical learning for students to successfully acquire a language. They also think that lexical learning is crucial for English speakers to read and write fluently. Improving all English skills and sub-abilities is fundamentally impacted by vocabulary development (Pearson, Fernandez, Lewedeg, & Kimbrough, 1997). Verhallen (1993) further showed that adequate lexical knowledge is substantial for learning a foreign language successfully because, without it, learners cannot put the structures they may have learned for successful communication to use.

To ascertain the effect of cultural background on learning English, several experimental forms of research were conducted. The effects of being familiar with the target culture on EL learning have been shown by Koul and Fisher (2005). Mavuru and Ramnarain (2017) made an effort to ascertain whether Saudi EFL students were having any particular listening comprehension issues as well as whether or not cultural background affected listening comprehension. The triangulation method was employed by the researchers to conduct this study. A group of 31 students received listening tests and questionnaires, and eight EFL instructors received reflection tests. The findings revealed that listening is the hardest skill to master, and that Saudi EFL students struggled greatly at all levels of perceiving, processing, and employing their oral understanding for a variety of reasons. The findings also showed that Saudi English students' listening processes were highly influenced by their cultural background (Namaziandost, Tavakoli, & Izadpanah, 2021).

The effects of cultural information on learning vocabulary via reading texts with a cultural focus were examined by Namaziandost, Shafiee, and Esfahani (2020). Actually, 158 upper-intermediate EFL students (males and females) participated in this study. The respondents were split equally into three groups, one for each gender: Group A (Target Culture Group), Group B (Source Culture Group), and Group C (Culture Free Group). Following the homogenization of the responses through a pre-test on lexical items, the three groups received their instruction in reading comprehension using materials that reflected a particular culture. Numerous reading books relevant to American, British, and Iranian cultures, and culture-free materials were submitted to the three groups respectively.

Learning English is improved when students are familiar with cultural background information, according to a survey of the literature in the area of cultural awareness. The findings of the studies discussed above demonstrated that students' reading and listening abilities would be improved by activating their cultural schema. The majority of the studies mentioned above looked at how cultural knowledge, schema, and familiarity affected the improvement of reading, speaking, and listening skills in EFL learners. Research studies on how cultural background affects the development of Saudi EFL learners' lexical knowledge and idiomatic phrases are quite scarce. The goal of the current work was to examine how culturally relevant resources affected the vocabulary and idiomatic expressions knowledge of Iranian pre-intermediate EFL learners.

## 3. Methods

### 3.1 Participants

Based on the results of the Oxford Quick Placement Test, 70 participants were chosen from 90 students. From two language schools in Saudi Arabia, they were hired. The participants' ages ranged from 15 to 22 years old, and their level of English ability was pre-intermediate. Three equal empirical groups—American Culture (AC), Saudi Culture (SC), and Culture-Free (CF)—were randomly allocated to the target subjects.

### 3.2 Instruments

The Oxford Quick Placement Test is the study's initial tool. This technique was used to uniformly distribute the respondents. It helped the researchers comprehend the condition of their subjects more fully. Students who score between 28 and 39 on the test, which has 60 multiple-choice items, are considered pre-intermediate. The results of this test led to the final volunteers for the current inquiry being 70 pre-intermediate responses.

The researcher-created vocabulary-idiomatic expressions test was the second instrument used to get the required data. It was based on the textbooks of the learners. It contained 50 objective questions, 25 items testing learners' lexical abilities, and 25 items related to idiomatic phrases. The given test's validity and reliability were confirmed. Three English instructors reviewed the validity of the test after it was created. In other words, three English EFL teachers read the experimental tests and suggested certain changes in terms of simplicity and representativeness to ensure the validity of the test questions. The exam was subsequently modified and piloted on a comparable group at a different place using course materials that matched those of the target group. The test was then ready for usage. The KR-21 formula was used to determine its reliability ($r = 0.81$).

The final instrument was a post-test on lexical and idiomatic expressions that the researchers had created. It was done to assess how the treatment affected the subjects' vocabulary growth. The test's whole was identical to what was covered in the pre-test. The only distinction was that the choices and items were arranged differently to eliminate the chance of memorizing the pre-test answers. Since it was a sample from the pre-test that had been alerted, this test was regarded as legitimate and reliable.

### 3.3 Research Procedures

The Oxford Quick Placement Test was initially given to 90 Saudi EFL students. Then, 70 pre-intermediate students were chosen as the study's final participants based on their performance on the OQPT. After the respondents were chosen, they were divided into three groups at random: AC, SC, and CF. A vocabulary exam was used to pre-test each group's participants after which the treatment began. Regarding the therapy, each group received instruction on the resources that reflected a certain culture. The course materials included texts with new terminology and idiomatic expressions on specific cultural issues; for instance, the SC group was taught texts about Saudi culture. The idioms and terms employed in the aforementioned writings had to do with Saudi Arabian culture. The AC group was taught ten works that were focused on American culture. The texts employed words and idioms that were appropriate to American culture. The CF group was taught 15 texts that were culture-free and contained new vocabulary. It took 12 sessions of 55 minutes each to complete the instruction. The participants in the first session were homogenized by the researchers, who then gave the students the pre-test in the second session. The aforementioned texts were taught over the course of eight sessions, and in the last class, the examiners administered a post-test of lexical and idiomatic expressions to the three groups. Eventually, SPSS software was used to examine the data that had been gathered.

## 4. Results and Data Analysis

To analyze the data collected, the researchers employed SPSS (v.27). First, they checked the degree of data normality using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test. They then calculated descriptive statistics. Thirdly, they used a paired sample t-test and a one-way ANOVA to determine how the intervention affected the students' lexical knowledge. In Table 1 below, the K-S test was administered to check the normality of the learners' scores in the pre and post-tests.

Table 1. One-sample (normality) K-S test

|  | Statistic | df | Sig. |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| AC Pre | .167 | 69 | .02 |
| AC Post | .239 | 69 | .09 |
| SC Pre | .340 | 69 | .03 |
| SC Post | .146 | 69 | .41 |
| CF Pre | .283 | 69 | .11 |
| CF Post | .203 | 69 | .22 |

The statistics of the scores are normal, as shown in Table 1 ($p > 0.05$). To get to the results, one-way ANOVA and paired samples t-test have been used. It was crucial to determine whether there were any potential differences in the experimental groups' lexical and idiomatic expression expertise before beginning the intervention. Consequently, a one-way ANOVA was used.

Table 2. The pre-test results and descriptive statistics

|  | N | M | SD | SE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| AC | 23 | 13.24 | 1.15 | .24 |
| SC | 23 | 12.92 | 1.42 | .35 |
| CF | 24 | 13.80 | 1.44 | .31 |
| Total | 70 | 12.32 | 1.31 | .19 |

According to Table 2, the pre-test results for the three groups were nearly comparable; their statistical means show that the three groups had identical lexical and idiomatic expression knowledge prior to the therapy.

Table 3. One-way ANOVA test

|  | Sum of squares | df | Mean square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Between groups | 8.92 | 3 | 2.92 | 2.02 | .13 |
| Within groups | 113.59 | 66 | 1.91 |  |  |
| Total | 122.40 | 69 |  |  |  |

Table 3 shows the mean differences among the subjects on the pre-test. There is no significant difference between the groups' pre-tests ($p < 0.05$) because Sig (.13) is higher than (0.05). On the pre-test, the groups did indeed perform equally.

The first and second research questions posed in this study were to determine whether cultural sensitivity had any appreciable impact on the vocabulary and idiomatic knowledge development of Saudi pre-intermediate EFL learners. Therefore, a one-way ANOVA had to be performed. Table 4 below shows that the mean scores of the AC and the SC groups are 17.01 and 16.73, respectively, on the post-test. The mean score of the CF group is 12.02. It seems the AC and the SC groups excelled the CF group on the post-test.

Table 4. The post-test results and their descriptive statistics

|  | N | M | SD | SE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| AC | 23 | 17.01 | .84 | .22 |
| SC | 23 | 16.73 | 1.28 | .27 |
| CF | 24 | 12.02 | 1.89 | .41 |
| Total | 70 | 15.94 | 1.81 | .25 |

Table 5. One-way ANOVA (post-test of AC, SC, and CF groups)

|  | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Between groups | 106.20 | 2 | 53.60 | 28.73 | .01 |
| Within groups | 103.74 | 67 | 2.83 |  |  |
| Total | 209.94 | 69 |  |  |  |

The results of the three groups' post-test scores are shown in Table 5, as can be noticed. There is a clear significant difference between the post-tests of the groups ($p < 0.05$) since (Sig = .01) is less than (0.05). On the vocabulary-idiomatic expressions post-test, it can be said that the AC and SC groups outperformed the CF group.

Table 6. Post-Hoc Scheffe test (post-test of AC, SC, and CF groups)

| (a) Groups | (b) Groups | Mean Difference (a-b) | SE | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| AC | AC | .40 | .41 | .03 |
|  | CF | 5.00 | .41 | .00 |
| SC | SC | -.40 | .41 | .03 |
|  | CF | 2.80 | .41 | 00 |
| CF | AC | -5.00 | .41 | 00 |
|  | IC | -2.80 | .41 | 00 |

The results of the post-test for each group are contrasted in Table 6 above. This table demonstrates a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) between the post-test results for the CF group and the post-test results for both the AG and SC groups. The results also show that there is no statistically significant difference between the AG and SC groups' scores ($p < 0.05$). The researchers came to the conclusion that the development of English lexical and idiomatic expressions is significantly influenced by both Saudi culture and American culture. To determine whether there are any potential notable variations between the subjects' scores prior to and following the intervention, paired-sample t-tests were also utilized (See Table 7 below).

Table 7. Paired samples t-test (pre and post-tests of the three groups)

| | | **Paired Differences** | | | | | **t** | **df** | **Sig. (2-tailed)** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **Mean** | **Std. deviation** | **Std. error mean** | **95% Confidence interval of the difference** | | | | |
| | | | | | **Lower** | **Upper** | | | |
| Pair 1 | AC Post – AC Pre | 3.90 | 1.41 | .34 | 3.19 | 4.51 | 12.20 | 22 | .00 |
| Pair 2 | SC Post – SC Pre | 3.92 | 1.14 | .26 | 3.31 | 4.41 | 15.41 | 22 | .00 |
| Pair 3 | CF Post – CF Pre | .23 | .45 | .08 | .03 | .46 | 2.61 | 23 | .08 |

Table (3) helped the researchers to answer the third research question. The CF group's post-test and pre-test differences in Table 7 are not statistically significant since Sig (.07) is higher than 0.05. Additionally, as Sig (.00) is less than 0.05, the difference between the AC group's post-test and pre-test is noteworthy. Thus, it can be said that the therapy (teaching materials from the American culture) had a favorable impact on this group's English vocabulary and idiomatic expressions. Finally, Table 7 demonstrates that there was a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test of the SC group, with Sig (.00) less than 0.05 (p <.,05) suggesting that teaching English lexical items and idioms from the Saudi culture had a substantial impact.

## 5. Discussion

In order to define the impact of cultural awareness on enhancing learners' lexical and idiomatic expressions, the researchers used one-way ANOVA in addition to paired sample t-test to examine the collected data. The outcomes demonstrated that the AC and SC groups outperformed the CF learners. The research's conclusions are consistent with those of Namaziandost et al. (2020), who looked at how using cultural materials affected Iranian EFL students' listening comprehension. Their findings demonstrated that on the listening comprehension post-test, the EG performed better than the CG. Also, Tavakoli, Tavakoli, Shirinbakhsh, and Rezazadeh (2012), who examined the effects of cultural background information on reading comprehension, are compatible with this study. The findings showed that respondents' ability to make inferences and understand literal text was highly influenced by their cultural familiarity.

Students must be culturally literate since, according to Hayati (2009), Grimshaw (1998), and Namaziandost, Tavakoli, and Izadpanah (2021), this is a prerequisite for learning a language. They persisted in saying that EFL learners can only learn a language professionally once they have a sufficient cultural background in it. Background knowledge proponents contend that refreshing background knowledge and connecting new information to historical knowledge helps improve comprehension. Students won't understand new passages properly if they don't have relevant knowledge about various topics in their heads (Bilokcuoglu, 2014; Bobrow & Bell, 1973; Ramfez-Lizcano & Cabrera-Tovar, 2020).

This research is enhanced by the schema theory, which postulates that human knowledge is divided into smaller components called schemata and that information is stored within them. The schema that promotes learning new information has the ability to activate the fundamental knowledge system and connect learned information. Students who want to acquire something new must draw connections between new and previously learned material.

Language inputs should be mastered in accordance with existing schemata since the acquisition of new abilities depends on them. Schema-based teaching, in accordance with Alptekin (2002) and Aldera (2017), aids students in differentiating between new words with comparable meanings. They help students improve their ability to express themselves and consolidate their knowledge of existing and new vocabulary. By relating new terminology to what they already know, they can acquire it in a relaxed setting. Alptekin (2002), Aldera (2017), and Namaziandost, Tavakoli, and Izadpanah (2021) think that learning new words based on the schema theory may help EFL learners develop positive attitudes toward acquiring new words and spark their joy in doing so, resulting in a strong passion and interest in learning English.

The helpful impact of cultural background information in enhancing abilities and subskills is further illuminated by this study. Knowing a language requires knowing that language's culture because language and culture are intertwined. This study was distinctive in that it broadened participants' vocabulary and understanding of idiomatic phrases by teaching them about various cultural practices, new words, and expressions.

## 6. Conclusion

The researchers draw the conclusion that the explicit use of culturally focused learning materials in English teaching can result in positive outcomes as the findings of the current research study show. This leads to the conclusion that learning English can be facilitated by receiving teaching that incorporates cultural components. The findings of this study confirmed that providing EFL learners with adequate cultural material and helping them increase their cultural awareness can have a favorable effect on their lexical knowledge.

The results of this study provide various advantages for educators, students, and those who create educational materials. This study suggests that teachers should stimulate their students' schema before carrying out various tasks. When a subject includes cultural elements that differ from the learners' own culture, the EFL teacher is required to provide relevant cultural background information. The essential requirement for effective speaking and writing is previous knowledge. As a result, exposure to cultural resources is encouraged for language students

who want to improve their perceptive and productive skills. Increased exposure to specific culturally related resources can improve language proficiency in students.

It is thought that giving speakers and readers relevant cultural warm-up exercises to do before teaching passages, as well as rendering the texts more familiar and simple prior to teaching them, can be helpful. Instructors must be aware of the value of strategies that improve students' comprehension of the text and place emphasis on courses that instruct foreign language students in the techniques of prior knowledge activation and text nativization before reading passages. The Ministry of Education may recognize the value of cultural materials thanks to the findings of this study.

Even though we did our best to conduct this research, every study has flaws or limits. One drawback of this study is the limited sample size, which consisted of only 60 Iranian learners; as a result, we should be cautious when extrapolating the findings to other communities or situations. In order to increase the generalizability of the results, more volunteers are suggested for the following investigations. Since only quantitative data were gathered to address the research issue, it is advised that future studies incorporate both qualitative and quantitative data to improve the reliability of their conclusions. Future studies are advised to do similar research studies in ESL environments since the subjects in this study were only EFL learners.

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