


Teachers' Perceptions on the Effectiveness of Using the Discourse Based Approach on Raising Algerian Business English learners' Intercultural Communication.

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Abstract:

English has become the most utilized language in intercultural communication, worldwide, as it is considered as the *lingua-franca* of the 21st century. Teaching English as a second or foreign language, alike, has been always a challenging task due to many considerations. However, the choice of the suitable teaching techniques and appropriate materials that meet learners' needs and expectations is regarded as one of the fundamental challenges. Raising learners' intercultural awareness is one of the vital objectives of ESP teaching in general and business English teaching in particular. In other words, business English teaching endeavours chiefly to promote learners' abilities to communicate properly in some situations because they need to build not only their learners' linguistic awareness but also their pragmatic competencies. To fulfil this, Discourse Analysis (DA) would be a good alternative that meets this objective. DA has brought scholars and critics altogether to come up with new linguistic approaches and methodologies. The present study aims at assessing teachers' views and attitudes towards the usefulness of the discourse-based approach in enhancing business English learners' intercultural communicative skills. In doing so, a study has been conducted on a sample of twenty four (24) business English teachers, from different affiliations, to check their different viewpoints. The findings of this study prove that the discourse-based approach, if it is applied properly, could contribute to enhancing not only Business English learners' linguistic abilities, but also their intercultural awareness.

Keywords Business English, Discourse Analysis, ESP, Needs' Analysis, Intercultural Communication.

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1. INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt that English has become a widely utilized means of intercultural communication. In reality, English is regarded as the lingua-franca of the 21st century. In this regard, as reported by Podboj (2013) “linguistic history shows us that lingua francas and international business languages change hand in hand with political and economic changes”(p.74). Evidently, in Algeria, teaching EFL has been given an importance since decades.

Teaching English as a second or foreign language has been always a challenging task due to many considerations. One of the fundamental challenges is the choice of the suitable teaching approach and the appropriate useful materials that meet the learners’ needs and expectations.

Conventionally, teaching English involves the integration of the four skills, namely, writing, reading, listening, and speaking. However, classroom interaction could be limited to the backgrounds and common values of its members, but once being outside the class, pragmatic abilities are necessary to engage in social and cultural issues as stated by Yurtsever and Dilara (2021). In brief, as reported by Hai (2004), “for true communicative competence, students need more than grammar and vocabulary” (p.36).

Communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking are highlighted as important four C’s in 21st-century teaching classrooms as stated by National Education Association, (2012). Certainly, there is a clear change in knowledge and learners need to be aware and should be prepared for this change by being familiar with these vital C’s.

Raising learners’ intercommunicative skills is one of the vital objectives of ESP teaching as a branch of EFL in general and business English in particular. That is to say business English teaching endeavors chiefly to promote learners’ abilities to communicate suitably in many situations since BE teachers need to construct not only their learners’ linguistic awareness but also their communicative competencies. In Algeria, despite the fact that business English is given importance, BE teachers still use traditional teaching approaches that focus on the linguistic skills *per se* and neglect other pragmatic abilities such as discourse and communication. This abandonment has negative impacts on fostering learners’ intercultural communication competencies on both national and international scale.

The concept of Discourse Analysis (DA) has been emerging as an important discipline in linguistics. Since its emergence, DA got its significance among academics. It is considered as one of the interdisciplinary fields in the area of linguistics, and this is due to its social, cultural, and discursive principles.

The present study aims at assessing the usefulness as well as the opportunities of utilizing DA in enhancing Algerian BE learners’ intercultural communicative skills from their instructors’ standpoints. In other words, this study outlines the importance of DA as a teaching tool that would contribute to enhancing BE learners’ not only linguistic skills but also their intercultural capabilities.

In doing so, this study started with a brief review of literature. Then, a study was conducted on a sample of BE teachers in order to check their different points of view

as well as their attitudes regarding the discourse-based approach. The outcomes of the present study might be useful to Algerian BE teachers, syllabi designers, and curricula developers who are concerned with business English teaching.

1.1 Background of the Study:

ESP teaching has had several issues since its emergence. One of the fundamental challenges that ESP instructors have is determining the best teaching methods, strategies, and resources that satisfy learners' needs and expectations. On the other hand, they seek to improve their language and communication abilities. To fulfill this, using DA in ESP courses, and, particularly, in BE classes, would be of paramount significance.

1.2 Research Objective:

This study aims fundamentally at assessing teachers' perceptions on the usefulness of the integration of DA in BE classes for the sake of enhancing learners' intercultural communicative capabilities.

1.3 Significance of the study:

Through investigating teachers' perceptions and attitudes regarding the use of the discourse-based approach, the outcomes would provide insights for Algerian BE teachers, on one side, and syllabi designers as well as curricula developers, on the other side. Thus, the main significance of the present study for the field of BE teaching and learning is that it assist Algerian BE educators in choosing the appropriate teaching approach that meets the learners' needs. As a result, discourse-based approach is likely to be the most suitable one that ensures enhancing learners' intercultural communication as well as their linguistic capabilities.

1.4 Research Question:

The main research question that might be asked in this study is the following:

R.Q: What are Business English teachers' views about the integration of DA in BE classes to enhance learners' intercultural communicative skills?

1.4 Research Hypothesis:

The key hypothesis of the current study could be formulated as follows:

R.H: Adopting a discourse-based approach in BE classes is likely to be perceived positively among BE teachers since it has a positive impact on raising Business English students' intercultural communicative skills.

2. Review of the Literature

In this part, a review of the literature that has been published so far about ESP, BE, DA and their interrelationship is discussed.

2.1 Business English Teaching in Algerian Higher Education

English language got importance in Algerian higher education since decades. Likewise, business English gets its status as a favorite field of study due to its significance in today's globalized world. As stated by Camicottoli (2007) "there is a growing practical need for studying BE because in today's globalised world the job competition is ever keener, there is also a growing demand for academic credentials in business studies" (p.1).

In a previous study about the effectiveness of BE courses, Larbi and Bensafa (2020) concluded that that BE courses are poorly delivered and need to be promoted. Among the recommendations that have been provided is the training of BE teachers and the choice of a suitable teaching approach.

Thus, it might be stated that teaching BE in Algerian higher education needs to be promoted. The choice of the appropriate approaches is one of the priorities. Likewise, improving learners' intercultural communication must be among the main concerns.

2.2 Why is Intercultural Communication Awareness Important to BE Students?

Intercultural communication is very crucial in the business life. As quoted in Ochieng and Price (2010), Thomason (1988) defines "communication as the lifeblood of any system of human interaction as, without it, no meaningful or coherent activity can take place" (p.3). Accordingly, the notion of intercultural communicative (ICC) competence means many things to many people. First of all, Deardorff (2006) sees it as "the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (p.247).

Accordingly, Byram (1989) believes that the notions of linguistic awareness and cultural awareness may be combined. In this context, he pointed out that the idea of language awareness emerges when language as a form involving competencies is combined with its socio-cultural aspect. Then, by including components of the students' original languages or cultures, and challenging such socio-cultural issues with the values of target language speakers, language is linked to culture. He further added that several interrelated skills are included in constructing the competence of the proficient intercultural speaker.

He, then, goes a step further when he classifies some aspects to intercultural communication. According to him, intercultural communication could be composed of:

- Intercultural attitudes (savoir-être);
- Knowledge (Savoir) ;
- Skills of interpreting and relating;
- Skills of discovery and interaction (Savoir apprendre/ savoir-faire) cultures.
- Critical cultural awareness.

Intercultural Business Communication happens when business communication takes place in a specific intercultural setting. According to Byram (1997), Intercultural competence is the ability to understand and deal with cultural differences without being ethnocentric.

As stated by Zheng (2015) "intercultural communication occurs when people of diverse ethnic backgrounds discuss ideas and tasks in a language other than their native tongue" (p.198). In the same vein, Chaney and Martin (2007) define it as the communication between and inside enterprises including people from several cultures. In the business settings, communication could take oral or written forms, such as:

taking part in meetings; making presentations; correspondence; socializing; email writing; negotiating; report writing, and business letter writing, to name a few.

In a business setting, individuals who speak different languages and belong to various cultural backgrounds interrelate in international networks. In order to overcome the clash of civilizations while doing business in international contexts, intercultural business communication has become an attractive academic domain.

In a global business milieu, the capability to behave properly in diverse intercultural contexts is highly desirable amongst employers. However, from the teaching perspective, there are several challenges for BE teachers. Firstly, they need to be able to facilitate language acquisition. Secondly, they seek to improve their learners' cross-cultural awareness. Finally, they encourage them to develop a professional character as specialists who are required to act accurately in intercultural business settings.

All in all, from the aforementioned points of view, raising intercultural communication awareness plays a vital role in the business world. Thus, curricula developers, syllabi designers together with BE instructors are likely to design their corpora and lessons to achieve this goal.

2.3 The Role of Discourse Analysis in Enhancing Students' intercultural communication

The term Discourse means many things to many people. It is seen by Crystal (1994) as "a continuous stretch of language rather than a sentence, often constituting a coherent unit, such as a sermon, argument, joke or narrative" (p.25). However, a more acceptable definition of discourse would be the one presented by McCarthy and Carter (n.d), as cited in Paltridge and Burton (2000):

A view of language which takes into account the fact that linguistic patterns exist across stretches of texts. These patterns of language extend beyond the words, clauses and sentences which have been the traditional concern of much language teaching. The view of language we take focuses, where appropriate, on complete spoken and written texts and on the social and cultural contexts in which such language operates. (p.4)

Of course, in learning languages, understanding grammar and vocabulary is important. Nevertheless, in addition to sentence-level knowledge, it is helpful to be able to understand the meanings of utterances in the context. In the same line of thought, Paltridge (2000) highlights that discourse analysis seems to be a ground to be covered if we want to afford a thorough description of language in use. In general, as outlined by Enverovna (2020) "a discourse-based approach to language teaching entails the interaction of some elements such as DA, pragmatics, background knowledge and context" (p.87).

In short, according to the above views discourse analysis is simply the study of language beyond the sentence level, and from this the notion of context is likely to have fundamental importance.

Many researchers have dealt with context. In their views, Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000), see that, in discourse analysis, context refers to the non-linguistic and non-textual elements that affect written or spoken interaction. Similarly, Widdowson (2007) sees context as situations that are referred to as circumstances of place and time. He states that “When people talk to each other, they will naturally refer to what is present in such situations-present in the sense of both place (here) and time (now)” (p.19).

Also, raising learners’ intercultural communication is among the priorities of educationalists. In this regard, there were a lot of attempts to study the ways through which this latter could be accurately achieved. In the field of ESP, in general, and BE in particular, communication between cultures is unavoidable. Owing to this, the study of business discourse became a subfield in applied linguistics aiming at understanding the way people communicate strategically and effectively in an organizational context. This type of research, as portrayed by Podboj (2013) “generally uses discourse analysis, conversation analysis, and genre analysis of various data such as business meetings, correspondence, application letters etc” (p.74). More researchers dealt with such studies, namely, V. K. Bhatia (2010), Nickerson and Bargiela-Chiappini (2002) ,Clyne & Clyne (1996), Marra &Holmes (2004), Harris and Bargiela-Chiappini (2003), and others, to name a few.

Similarly, Beresova (2015) outlines the importance of using authentic materials to improve the intercultural understandings of English language learners. In his view, authentic materials may act as a connection to cultures of the language being learned or even to the international cultures.

Further researches such as Agudelo (2007) affirm that communicative language teaching activities develop intercultural communication. This could be achieved through engaging learners in intercultural communication that consist of national and international values. According to him, in addition to possessing discourse analysis comprehension together with an awareness of cultural differences, language teachers should be trained in imparting discursive consciousness to their learners and this, at both micro and macro levels.

Moreover, there were plenty of practical research that highlights the idea of increasing business English communication through analyses of interdiscursivity in specialized business discourses and practices. For instance, Devitt (1991) , Flowerdew and Wan (2006), studied the prevalence of intertextuality in the accountants’ discourse by analyzing tax computation letters written by tax accountants. Another study Wang and Aaltonen (2005) suggest that”Teachers of Business Communication have to rely largely on the analyses of fax messages for their teaching of how to communicate through e-mail. Some characteristics of fax messages can indeed be assumed to be similar to those of e-mail messages” (p.6). In the same line of thought, Hyland (2004) as cited by Bremner (2008) sees that “ teachers can help students to see that their texts do not stand alone but must be understood against a background of other opinions, viewpoints and experiences on the same theme” (p.307).

Howbeit, the works of Bhatia (1990), and Swales (1993) remain among the most significant ones since they contribute massively to raising language in use in some professional areas. In this vein, Widdowson (1998) claims that:

It is to further such communicative efficiency that extensive work has been done in the ESP field on genre analysis by such people as Swales and Bhatia (Swales, 1990; Bhatia, 1993). This seeks to identify the particular conventions for language use in certain domains of professional and occupational activity. It is a development from, and an improvement on, register analysis because it deals with discourse and not just text: that is to say, it seeks not simply to reveal what linguistic forms are manifested but how they realize, make real, the conceptual and rhetorical structures, modes of thought and action, which are established as conventional for certain discourse communities (p.7).

In his view, the idea behind these advancements is that communication is more than just putting words together in a grammatically accurate and rhetorically cohesive textual form; it is also about having a desired influence on members of a certain discourse community.

It is to be mentioned, according to the aforementioned studies, that utilizing authentic pieces of written or spoken discourse in BE courses could be helpful and fruitful. Hence, BE teachers could design their courses using a discourse-oriented approach. However, in Algeria there was not much importance given to the topic.

3. METHOD

To test the validity of the above mentioned hypothesis, this research was conducted using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. At first, a study of the existing literature has been done in order to get the basic notions. After that, an online questionnaire was addressed to a sample of teachers for the sake of gathering the needed data. This questionnaire aims at testing the teachers' viewpoints regarding the use of discourse in business English classes. Finally the gathered data were qualitatively and quantitatively analyzed.

3.1 The participants' sample

The participants in this study are twenty-four (24) Business English teachers from different Algerian universities. They were surveyed to determine their views about how effective is the discourse-based approach to teach business English and its usefulness in enhancing BE students' intercultural communication.

3.2 Research instrument

Teachers' feedback was obtained using an online questionnaire comprising three main parts. Each part related to a different aspect of the research. The main of the online questionnaire parts are represented as follows: (1) teachers' profile, (2) teachers' familiarity with the discourse based approach, and (3) teachers' suggestions to better

use of the discourse-based approach. This online questionnaire was addressed to the teachers through their emails. Their answers are automatically saved in the form.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Results of the Teachers' Questionnaire

Part one: Teachers' Profile.

In this first section, the questions aimed at checking the teachers' profiles i.e. their gender, affiliation and teaching experience.

A sample of twenty four (24) respondents took part in this questionnaire. They belong to various Algerian Universities (26%) are male and (74%) are female.

The teachers belong to different universities: Tlemcen University; Belabess University, Mascara University, Tiaret University, Laghouat University, Ouargla University; Constantine University; Guelma University, Higher School of Management Tlemcen, and Khenchela University.

Regarding the teaching experience, it is varied from novice teachers to more experienced ones. The teaching experience ranges from 2 years to 34 years.

Concerning the experience in business English classes, the respondents affirm that they have already taught business classes. This experience goes from one year to five years.

Part two: familiarity with discourse-based approach

In this part, the questions aimed at investigating the teachers' acquaintance with the discourse-based approach as well as its application.

Q1: what teaching approaches do you use in your classes?

Respondents' replied differently. Four respondents use the eclectic approach. However, for the rest, they answer differently. Among the approaches that participants use, are the following: the learner-centered, the communicative and collaborative approach, skills-centered, and content based, the constructivist approach, and direct method.

Q2: Do you use authentic materials while delivering your courses?

The big majority (21) answered positively, the rest (03) do not use them.

Q3: If yes, what type of materials?

Various replies were provided. The answers of the participants could be summarized as follow:

- Videos;
- Letters;
- Texts relevant to the speciality;
- Books and papers;
- Written texts;
- Newspapers;
- My summaries of the lesson;
- Authentic communications;
- Websites and texts from internet;
- Manuals;
- Recordings;

- Newspaper articles;
- Podcasts, audio materials from telephone conversations,
- Economic articles published in journals;
- Stories.

One teacher affirms that she does not use authentic materials. One other replied that she chooses the material depending on her learners' field and level.

Q4: Do you use pieces of discourse?

100 % of the participants confirm that they use discourse in their lessons. They affirm that integrating discourse is such a useful tool.

Q5: If yes, which type do you use most of the time?

In this question, teachers have to choose among a list of choices. The below bar chart (figure1) summarizes their replies.

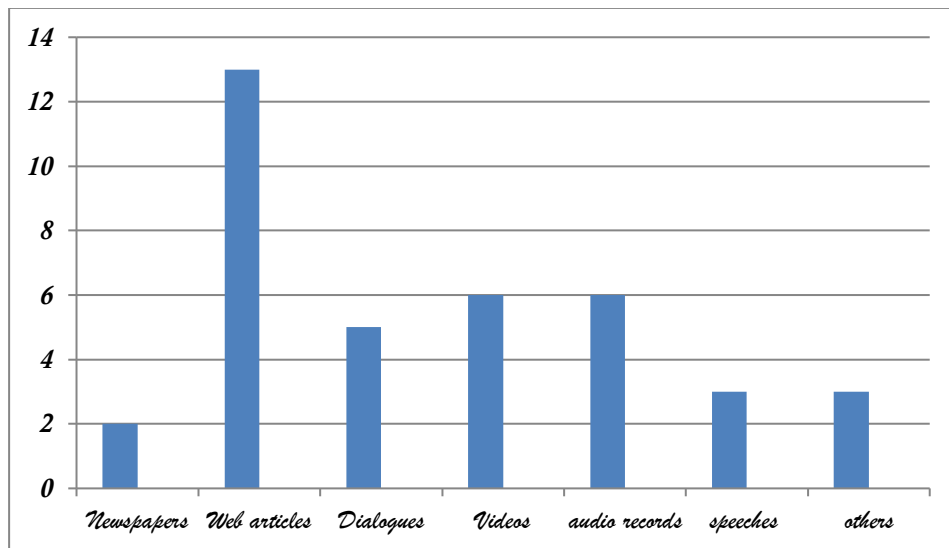


Figure1. Types of the discourse

From the graph above, it might be understood that BE teachers use variety of discourse types. However, they use internet articles most of the time and this is due to its availability and accessible easiness.

Q6: If you use other types, please mention them

Among the discourse that do not exist in the list, teachers' use extracts from books, manuals, reports, letters, students memoires, magazines, and realia .

Q7: How do you use these pieces of discourse?

Teachers' replies were numerous. Among them one can state the following (Table1):

Table1

Teachers' method of using discourse

Respondent	statement
Respondent1	“read them then explain the main key terms and get the most important pieces of information”;
Respondent2	“The use depends on the set objectives, as a support”;

Respondent3	“they are used as supporting materials that present real situations or events”;
Respondent4	“Comprehension analysis Activities and discussion “;
Respondent5	“to teach the four skills, to focus on the most common grammatical and terminology used in the students' field of study”;
Respondent6	“I usually start with a warm up to know how much students know about the subject, then I either invite them to read a short piece of writing or listen to a recording of about 2-3 minutes and engage a debate about it”;
Respondent7	“text analysis”;
Respondent8	“As reading texts”;
Respondent9	“Text dealing with one aspect of the specialty and teaching all levels of language”;
Respondent10	“I used translation, I taught vocabulary and grammar through texts”;
Respondent11	“Before introducing the content of lesson i.e. by the beginning of each lecture”;
Respondent12	“To improve speaking skills and listening as well also to give a larger idea about the context”;
Respondent13	« Speaking, reading, listening to develop their skills”;
Respondent14	“It depends on the skill I want to focus on”;
Respondent15	“Reading comprehension”;
Respondent16	“Reading comprehension texts”;
Respondent17	“to explain a specific point”;
Respondent18	“as listening activities”;
Respondent19	“Videos are meant to add authenticity” ;
Respondent 20	“Introduce them to the class either at the start or at the end and ask students about their interpretations creating debates and discussions”

From the replies above, one can notice a familiarity with such teaching materials. These authentic pieces of discourse are used differently and in diverse steps of the lesson. Generally, they are used as supporting materials that contribute in understanding the target skill.

Q8: Using authentic pieces of discourse is beneficial to raise BE learners’ intercultural communication.

In this question the Likert scale is used to check teachers’ view of the utility of discourse in enhancing learner’ intercultural communication. They are asked to choose among 4 options (Totally agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Totally disagree). The results are shown in the following pie chart (figure2).

Teachers' Perceptions on the Effectiveness of Using the Discourse Based Approach on Raising Algerian Business English learners' Intercultural Communication

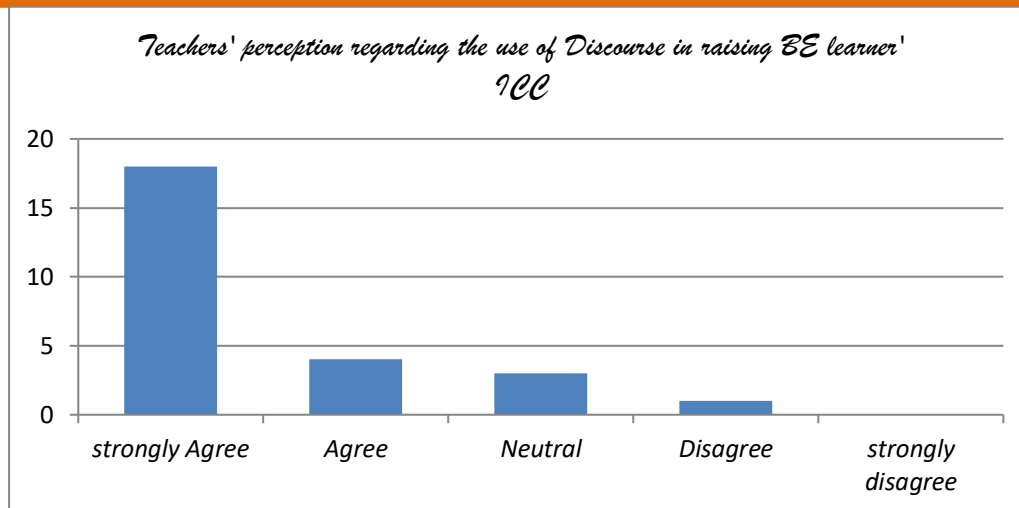


Figure2. Teachers' views on the use of discourse on raising students' intercultural communication.

As the graph showcases, the majority of the instructors believe that using authentic pieces of discourse has positive impact on raising the intercultural skills of BE learners'. On the other side, only two informants disagree about this fact. Three others are neutral neither agree nor disagree.

Q9: if you agree, how?

For those who agree, they see that the use of authentic discourse could contribute in improving the intercultural communication via giving authenticity to their lectures, and thus it puts the learners in real life situations. Among the lecturers' answers, one can state the following (Table2) :

Table2

Teachers' views on the effects of using discourse on learners' intercultural communication

Respondent	statement
Respondent1	“It gives the opportunity to the learners to live in real life situations, and this would be beneficial to them “
Respondent2	“People in order to show appropriate behaviors and attitudes in cross cultural situations should be taught through authentic materials such as oral experiences (classroom dialogues and debates). The teacher can also use videos, data show and accordingly the learner knows some new words and that helps to communicate effectively”.
Respondent3	“Teaching a new language must be culture-based. Learners will learn about the different ways of life, the other's culture thanks to the material used by the teacher”.
Respondent4	“It does so by widening their horizons and putting them

	in situations that can facilitate their comprehension of the other culture”
Respondent5	“They will broaden their knowledge”
Respondent6	“Teaching the cultural aspects enables students to be linguistically and communicatively competent in their target discourse community”
Respondent7	“It helps them reflect on and evaluate their own culture while accepting the others' difference”
Respondent8	“It helps learners situate their culture and that of the other” “By raising student's awareness about the constructions, metaphors of Business English”
Respondent9	“Texts should discuss global economic issues, and instruct students to think of their local issues, using strategies and skills learnt”.
Respondent10	“Learners will learn how to interpret, analyze, understand, explain and to think critically “
Respondent11	“To pick up the vocabulary, intonations and accents, also to give an image of the society”
Respondent12	“Real exposure to authentic language”
Respondent13	“It helps learns grasp the specific context and the intentions of the speaker”
Respondent14	“By dealing with texts related to the foreign culture”.
Respondent15	“To understand and to be understood”
Respondent16	“By focusing on culture-based components of the texts”
Respondent17	“Practice and learning”
Respondent 18	“There are some cultural concepts that you can't help but introduce even in the ESP course and what better way to do that the use of authentic materials, as stated before using any of those materials and asking students to debate it like idioms and then explain the meaning of the idiom and how in our culture we might use either similar or different words to express the same idea. Another example would be how some questions are considered normal where others are offending (and of course you will find yourself explaining the notion of offending”.

Owing to the previously stated answers, it might be noticed that utilizing discourse in BE classes may contribute in developing learners’ intercultural communication and this through communicative activities based on real life situations. Owing to this, these discursive activities could raise learners’ intercultural awareness, and as a result they will be able to communicate effectively in the target discourse community.

Part three: suggestions to better use of discourse based approach

The only question in this part aims at getting teachers' recommendations in using the discourse based approach.

Q1: any other recommendations to better use of the “discourse-based approach” to enhance Business English learners' intercultural communication.

In order to get new innovative ideas and techniques to a better use of the discourse-based approach in BE classes for the objective of raising learners' intercultural awareness and communication, the teachers provide some recommendations. Among these suggestions one can mention the following (Table3):

Table 3

Teachers' Recommendations

Respondent	statement
Respondent1	“Syllabi must contain pieces of discourse; teachers should pursue training in such approaches”.
Respondent2	“Exposition to various genres of each specialty”
Respondent3	“By highlighting statements/words in two colors: one for the native culture and one for the foreign one”.
Respondent4	“Auditory Reading books, articles Paraphrase some paragraphs “
Respondent5	“the discourse should suit students' level , age and background knowledge”
Respondent6	“More practical and the use of ICT”
Respondent7	“Scene enactment and simulation of real life situations”.
Respondent8	“Motivating learners to communicate and to compare themselves with other business English students”
Respondent9	“Using podcasts and real issues through listening and reading texts”.
Respondent10	“Reading on a regular basis”
Respondent11	“Engaging students and simulating real life contexts is helpful as students won't feel disconnected with situations they may encounter in their future career through teaching the meta-cognitive strategies “
Respondent12	“Reading and speaking and debating”
Respondent13	“The use of a variety of texts (articles, newspapers, speeches, etc.) to cover different contexts”.
Respondent14	“Students should be emerged in the target languages and its culture”
Respondent15	“Adopt new ways and innovate- Focus more on realia (eg: inviting fluent speakers who can imitate natives)”
Respondent16	“In the context of ESP, teachers may let the student pick

	up the topic he appreciates to show in classroom why not team works “.
Respondent 17	“Why not attempt test using such a tool where students are presented a (video, text, audio) containing a section of a relevant authentic discord and then they are asked questions regard that”

From the teachers’ recommendations, one can observe that Algerian BE teachers have vision regarding the teaching techniques. Evidently, they provide innovative ideas to promote the teaching of BE especially in terms of cultivating students to be capable to communicate effectively in an international scale.

3.4 DISCUSSION

After dealing with the literature review, then analyzing the outcomes of the questionnaire, the following conclusions could be formulated:

Algerian BE teachers’ tend to deliver their courses using other teaching approaches rather than the discourse based one. This is likely to have negative impacts on improving learners’ pragmatic skills, particularly, cultural awareness and communicative competencies.

Another important finding is the absence of official syllabi, and as a result a random choice of topics and teaching techniques. This haphazard selection would focus on only some skills and dismiss other important pragmatic elements such as communication and discursive competencies.

According to the collected data, it is important to note that only some teachers worry about raising their learners’ intercultural awareness. Since business learners extremely need this skill, it is a real loss for them. In this regard, BE teachers must be aware about this issue. In this case, they have to integrate cultural and social aspect of other cultures in order to foster learners’ intercultural awareness.

Furthermore, it might be stated that adopting such teaching approach in Algeria necessitates teachers’ training, on the one hand, and make it official, on the other. That is to say, universities must design syllabi that ensure the integration of tasks and courses that foster learners’ intercultural communication based on authentic written and spoken discourse that would contribute in fulfilling the learners’ discursive requirements.

Additionally, as previously stated, international business communication has become a preferable field of study for people interested in business. In Algeria, it seems that this is not the case. However, creating business schools and centers in addition to training specialist teachers would lead to promoting BE teaching, in general, and teaching intercultural communication, in particular.

From the questionnaire above, it might be concluded that Algerian universities could be a ground to undertake the discourse based approach as a teaching method to

promote business English students' intercultural communication. All in all, it could be noticed that there are several opportunities to advance BE teaching by adopting and implementing the appropriate approaches that meet learners' needs and expectations. Teachers should be aware of the importance of communication as a key element in business settings, and for this, they should work on choosing the appropriate topics, techniques, tools, and materials that develop intercultural communication know-hows.

In summary, these results indicate that there are plenty of advantages that the adoption of discourse based approach can bring to BE classes. It goes without saying that BE learners' main concern is to employ what they learn in real situations whether locally or internationally. However, in a multicultural business context, written or spoken communication is inevitable. In this regard, BE learners must be trained to communicate effectively in such situations. For instance, from the recommendations of the respondent teachers, topics such as idioms, business etiquette, negotiations...etc. could be taught in context through the use of genuine written or spoken discourses, and then getting cultural aspects and values.

5. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The present study was undertaken to determine the effects as well as the opportunities of using a discourse based approach to enhance BE learners' intercultural communicative abilities. In doing so, a study has been done on a sample of BE teachers in order to assess their views and attitudes vis-à-vis the discourse-based approach. The research findings showed that although teaching English in Algeria has been promoted, specialized language such as Business English needs enhancement. Based on our research, it appears that teaching/learning business English is challenging for both students, and tutors alike. Owing to this, adopting new innovative teaching techniques such as Discourse-based approach would offer a number of opportunities like fostering intercultural awareness.

As has been observed through the research study, Business English courses provided less appropriate conditions for the teaching of cultural, communicative, social, and interpersonal skills and aspects of language learning. It is thus our duty as instructors to afford a suitable teaching atmosphere that fully meets both learners' linguistic and pragmatic skills.

As a conclusion, BE learners, for the sake of being competent intercultural communicators, they do not rely only on classroom activities. Rather, they must enhance this skill outside the classroom boundaries. For example, through reading about other cultures, watching videos, and movies, and most importantly interacting with foreigners. As a result, they can understand and be understood. Practically, Zheng (2015) suggests four main action plan strategies for both teachers and learners that would help the latter to increase their intercultural communication. These strategies include the following: (1) keep it simple; (2) cultural knowledge; (3) engage in active listening; and (4) open up to new ideas, be optimistic and appreciate cultural

differences. Similarly, Hellmundt et al. (1998) suggest practical in-class and out-class strategies to enhance business students' intercultural communication.

In the future, the researchers aim to design a discourse-based syllabus for Business English teachers and students. This syllabus will be addressed to students of the Faculty of Economics at Tlemcen University. This syllabus has as an objective the integration of activities that help students to foster their intercultural communicative competencies through the assimilation of foreign social and cultural elements.

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