

The Impact of Cultural Intelligence on English Language Teaching, Learning, and Assessment in Saudi Universities

Hind Aljuaid

Foreign Languages Department, College of Arts, Taif University, Taif, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Email: dr.hind@tu.edu.sa

How to cite this paper: Aljuaid, H. (2024). The Impact of Cultural Intelligence on English Language Teaching, Learning, and Assessment in Saudi Universities. *Open Journal of Modern Linguistics, 14*, 425-461. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ojml.2024.143023>

Received: May 14, 2024

Accepted: June 14, 2024

Published: June 17, 2024

Copyright © 2024 by author(s) and Scientific Research Publishing Inc.

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0).

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



Open Access

Abstract

English proficiency is crucial for Saudi Arabian students due to its global importance and Vision 2030's emphasis on a knowledge-based economy. However, traditional teaching methods often disregard the role of cultural intelligence (CQ) in effective language learning and assessment. This paper explores the impact of CQ on English language teaching, learning, and evaluation in Saudi universities. Secondary data was collected from peer-reviewed journals on the topic. Forty-three secondary sources were collected from reputable academic databases like Scopus and Google Scholar. Inductive and deductive analysis was conducted to identify the main themes emerging from the managed scholarly resources. Findings revealed a moderate level of CQ among students and instructors, with metacognition, behavioral, interpersonal, and cultural knowledge impacting English language teaching and learning. A significant positive correlation was found between CQ and English language proficiency, indicating that higher CQ students performed better in language acquisition. Teachers with higher CQ were found to employ more culturally sensitive pedagogies and assessment methods, increasing student engagement and learning satisfaction. The findings show CQ is integral to English language teaching, learning, and evaluation in Saudi universities. Incorporating CQ-based pedagogies and assessment practices can significantly improve learning outcomes, enhance student motivation, and foster intercultural understanding. Insights from this study recommend integrating CQ awareness training for instructors and developing culturally appropriate curriculum and assessment tools to optimize English language learning in Saudi Arabia.

Keywords

Cultural Intelligence in EFL, Cultural Intelligence and English Teaching,

1. Introduction

With globalization, international communication has become necessary as people from different cultures and norms interact (Hong et al., 2021). Cultural intelligence (CQ) has become essential in facilitating individuals to adapt and thrive in culturally diverse settings (Abdulaziz & Almeshari, 2019; Gedik, 2022). While there are different definitions of CQ, the concept is broadly perceived to include the ability to relate and work effectively in culturally diverse settings (Radwan, 2022). A growing body of scholarly literature shows that CQ is integral to second language acquisition (SLA) (McEown et al., 2023; Presbitero, 2020; Yu, 2020). Chen and Zhang (2022) alluded that the education system plays a central role in facilitating CQ, primarily through the uptake of English in SLA settings. This paper explores cultural intelligence's impact on English language teaching, learning, and assessment in Saudi universities.

In the last decade, scholars and practitioners have attempted to assess how CQ impacts English language teaching, learning, and assessment in universities (Abdulaziz & Almeshari, 2019; Gedik, 2022). CQ refers to the ability to interact effectively with individuals from different cultural backgrounds (Akkakoson, 2019; Radwan, 2022). Kondina (2021) alluded that regarding CQ in language teaching and learning, the focus is not on memorizing vocabulary and grammar rules but on “understanding the cultural context surrounding the target language (p. 97).” Focus on the cultural contexts ensures learners achieve fluency and effective communication in the target language (Abumelha, 2023). The extant literature reveals that when confronted with unconventional viewpoints or behaviors, persons with high CQ employ multiplex strategies to adapt to diverse cultural settings (Akkakoson, 2019; Saud, 2019).

Underwriting the above literature considerations, it becomes evident that high cultural intelligence is becoming increasingly essential worldwide, necessitating the need to educate English foreign language (EFL) learners about CQ in universities. Recent studies show that CQ could help teachers and students navigate the complexities of intercultural communication and interaction (Ahmed, 2022; Ali & Saleem, 2022). However, SLA success also depends on relevant assessment tools to evaluate the effectiveness of language teaching and learning programs (Alyeksyeyeva et al., 2022; Zou & Lertlit, 2022). In the process, CQ enables them to develop a deeper understanding of the cultural nuances that influence language use and interpretation.

Despite its perceived impact on SLA, there is a growing debate about whether CQ helps students become more effective communicators in multicultural settings. Critics observe that CQ may not necessarily empower EFL students to adapt their local language skills to different cultural contexts, making their

communication less meaningful and impactful (Ahmed, 2022; Karbakhsh & Ahmadi, 2020; Radwan, 2022). In contrast, the proponent's asset is that cultural intelligence fosters empathy and respect for diverse perspectives, which is essential for successful language learning. Shanti (2020) clarified that language is inherently cultural since it reflects norms around behavior, beliefs, and values in explicit and subtle ways. To this end, language teaching and learning strategies have been investigated to assess how these aspects enhance target language acquisition (Stephens et al., 2020; Tiwari, 2023). However, there is a lack of studies on how CQ affects English language teaching, learning, and assessment.

SLA studies show that CQ is developed through various interventions, including field experiences in host countries and traditional EFL academic courses (Taheri et al., 2019; Zou & Lertlit, 2022). In the EFL context, scholars are primarily in consensus that students' CQ levels vary across different dimensions, with behavioral, motivational, and metacognitive cultural intelligence being high (Thao et al., 2023; Wujiabudula & Karatepe, 2020), while the cognitive aspect is moderate (Alqarni, 2023; Chen & Zhang, 2022). EFL students' proficiency level has been noted to influence their cognitive CQ (Ambele & Boonsuk, 2021; Tai & Zhao, 2022), and teachers are encouraged to consider these aspects when designing their curriculum instruction.

Teachers must consider that intercultural orientation in language learning intends to transform learners' identities through behavioral, motivational, and cognitive processes (Sarimsakova, 2021). An Indonesian study found EFL learners have high values behavioral and motivational cultural quotient. However, studies in China and Thailand give diverse findings in that EFL learners employ various language learning strategies tied to their cultural values (Mcgregor, 2019; Omar et al., 2022; Salam et al., 2020). Findings from these studies suggest that CQ plays a role in language learning and should be considered in English language assessment and instruction. Yet, there are questions regarding the effectiveness of existing English instruction methods and whether available assessment tools facilitate English language learning among EFL students (Rachmaty et al., 2018), especially in Saudi Arabia (Omar et al., 2022).

A theoretical approach to English language teaching broadly includes sociological and cognitive views, allowing logical thinking and emotional intelligence in learners (Ismailov, 2021; Karadağ, 2022; Karbakhsh & Ahmadi, 2020) while promoting emotive involvement and interdisciplinary learning (Kondina, 2021). While Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) and its six categories (behavioral, motivational, cognitive, metacognitive, interpersonal, and cultural knowledge) remain influential (Zou & Lertlit, 2022), language teaching and learning strategies have evolved to encompass additional models and frameworks. Lev Vygotsky developed the Sociocultural Theory (Taber, 2020), which continues to influence language teaching approaches that emphasize the social and cultural aspects of learning. Gloria Ladson-Billings also advocated for Culturally Responsive Teaching, which aims to recognize and leverage students' cultural backgrounds in the learning process (Ladson-Billings, 2022).

As such, teachers need to adapt their instructional methods to reflect the diverse cultural backgrounds of their students, creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment. Rajaram (2023) raised concerns about the lack of emphasis on multilingual and intercultural approaches that recognize the value of learners' existing languages and cultural backgrounds in SLA courses. Specifically, less attention has been paid to the link between CQ and its impact on English language teaching, learning, and assessment, especially in Saudi Arabia (Dahmash, 2023; Elmahidi et al., 2023). Existing intelligence tests such as Raven's Progressive Matrices and Duolingo English Test used for EFL learners have been criticized for cultural bias since they fail to capture students' cultural norms and backgrounds, creating a potential knowledge gap. Cultural intelligence has been noted as essential to help bridge this gap in English SLA, teaching, and assessment (Galloway & Rose, 2018; Gedik, 2022). Thus, future research on this topic could benefit from understanding how CQ contributes to English language teaching, learning, and assessment in higher education institutions. To this end, the objectives of this paper were as follows:

Objective 1: To evaluate the impact of cultural intelligence on English language teaching among educators in Saudi Universities.

Objective 2: To determine the impact of cultural intelligence on English language learning among EFL students in Saudi Universities,

Objective 3: To identify how cultural intelligence influences English language assessment in the context of Saudi Universities.

2. Literature Review

The current section presents past research on cultural intelligence in ESL settings. The main issues discussed in the literature are detailed to set the context of the study. Specific issues addressed include the conceptualization of CQ, the impact CQ has on English language teaching, learning, and assessment, and remaining issues on the topic.

2.1. Conceptualizing Cultural Intelligence

While there is no single definition of CQ, scholars and practitioners largely agree that it pertains to an individual's aptitude to operate proficiently in culturally varied environments (Kondina, 2021; Li, 2020; Liu & Rao, 2023; Ma & Abdul, 2022). CQ entails comprehending and maneuvering through diverse cultural conventions, attitudes, behaviors, and communication styles (Presbitero, 2020; Yu, 2020). According to Gedik (2022), CQ is an essential skill in contemporary society, where individuals from diverse backgrounds frequently engage in various academic and professional contexts. According to Zou and Lertlit (2022), CQ can be contextualized using six main dimensions, namely behavioral, motivational, cognitive, metacognitive, interpersonal, and cultural knowledge.

First, the behavioral dimension focuses on an individual's ability to effectively adapt verbal and non-verbal behavior to fit different cultural contexts (Galloway

& Rose, 2018; Gedik, 2022). Chen and Zhang (2022) argued that it involves behaving appropriately and effectively in diverse cultural settings. Behavioral CQ often includes speech acts and non-verbal and verbal behaviors (Gedik, 2022; Zou & Lertlit, 2022). Second, the motivational dimension relates to an individual's ability to persevere and remain resilient when faced with cultural challenges. Zou and Lertlit (2022) asserted that it involves the motivation to overcome obstacles and learn from cross-cultural experiences.

Third, the cognitive dimension refers to an individual's knowledge and understanding of different cultures. Abdulaziz and Almeshari (2019) noted that this knowledge encompasses various aspects, including cultural norms, behaviors, and practices that focus on being aware of how people in different cultures communicate, express emotions, engage in social interactions, and behave in various situations. Gedik (2022) added that the cognitive process includes cultural values that guide and shape different cultures, such as individualism vs. collectivism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance. According to Presbitero (2020), understanding how cultural symbols and artifacts are used in different cultures also helps avoid misunderstandings and misinterpretations.

Fourth, the metacognitive dimension is also part of the cognitive aspect, focusing on an individual's ability to plan, monitor, and adjust their thinking and learning strategies in cross-cultural situations (McEown et al., 2023; Yu, 2020). Elaboration involves self-awareness, reflection, and the capacity to adapt cognitive processes to different cultural contexts (Zou & Lertlit, 2022). Fifth, the CQ relationship is about an individual's ability to build positive and productive relationships with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. The interpersonal dimension emphasizes effective communication, empathy, and establishing rapport across cultures (Chen & Zhang, 2022). Lastly, cultural knowledge involves understanding the similarities and differences between individuals from different backgrounds. For example, it includes understanding cultural norms, values, customs, and communication styles (Dahmash, 2023; Elmahidi et al., 2023).

2.2. English Language Teaching

Available studies on how CQ impacts English language teaching primarily focus on business-related sectors and cross-cultural settings (Gedik, 2022; Hong et al., 2021; Karadağ, 2022; Presbitero, 2020), with few focusing on higher learning institutions (Rajaram, 2023). Besides, the studies have been widely conducted in international universities or host countries outside the native settings of EFL learners (Stephens et al., 2020; Wujiabudula & Karatepe, 2020). As a result, there is a lack of research inquiring into the impact of CQ on English language teaching, which is notably scarce. The emphasis on cultural instruction in language programs has been limited in most institutions and colleges.

In SLA, researchers have recently worked with the belief that language learning involves absorbing the specific pragmatic norms and cultural values expressed in the target language. Critics argue that the teaching scenario and me-

thods employed in English Language Teaching (ELT) in colleges should be modified to incorporate cultural aspects rather than focusing solely on language proficiency (McEown et al., 2023; Radwan, 2022). Teachers have to comprehend the degree to which cultural background information impacts language acquisition and instruction and how they might use this influence to facilitate curriculum instruction (Akkakoson, 2019). To consider the influence of culture on language teaching, it is essential to illustrate its various functions in the different aspects of language learning and teaching, including listening, speaking, reading, and translating.

Teachers with cultural intelligence are more adept at creating and presenting a culturally appropriate and considerate curriculum. Such educators can include authentic materials, examples, and discussions that reflect the cultural context of EFL learners. Stephens et al. (2020) asserted that this approach can enhance students' understanding and engagement with the English language as they can relate it to their culture. Moreover, Chen and Zhang (2022) agreed that teachers with high cultural intelligence are more likely to be aware of the cultural norms, values, and communication styles of native students. As a result, this awareness enables educators to adapt their teaching strategies to cater to the specific needs of EFL learners, such as providing explicit explanations for specific cultural references or using teaching techniques that align with the student's cultural learning preferences.

Teachers face a challenge in raising students' awareness of the globalization of English due to a shortage of globally oriented-ELT materials. Galloway and Rose (2018) build on prior research in response to requests for CQ to introduce and promote Global English in Japanese classrooms. An analysis of student reflections demonstrated that the presenting task enabled students to choose and explore English content relevant to their experiences and interests. Ambele and Boonsuk (2021) examined Thai students' views on teaching English as a lingua franca. Results suggested teachers should improve students' knowledge of English accents and variety and encourage a flexible mentality to tolerate communication disparities. These findings show CQ is crucial to teaching English in its cultural context and improving communication.

2.3. English Language Learning

A growing body of literature holds that CQ is thought to account for the varying levels of effectiveness individuals display in culturally different environments. Research has established that proficient language learners employ more language-learning strategies than less successful learners (Karadağ, 2022; Li, 2020). Students with a profound comprehension of diverse cultures are more inclined to possess a favorable disposition toward acquiring English language skills (Ma & Abdul, 2022). During the process, individuals can develop an appreciation for the variety of language usage, leading to heightened motivation and involvement. In addition, CQ can enhance students' proficiency in international com-

munication, a crucial ability in today's globalized society (Liu & Rao, 2023; Mcgregor, 2019).

Developing cultural intelligence is of similar importance to pupils. By obtaining cultural knowledge and skills, English language learners can enhance their communication and interaction abilities with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. Cultural intelligence enhances intercultural competence, a crucial factor for achieving proficiency in language acquisition and effective communication. Rachmawaty et al. (2018) investigated the correlation between cultural intelligence (CQ), language learning technique, and English language proficiency. The study utilized data from 87 second-year students enrolled in the English Department at Mulawarman University. The findings indicate that the students' CQ level was moderate, with metacognitive and motivational variables being the primary influences for students.

Gedik (2022) conducted a study using qualitative and quantitative methods to investigate the CQ of learners at a state institution in Türkiye. The qualitative analysis identified the learners' notable abilities, such as effective communication and adaptability, as well as their enthusiasm for other cultures, which contributed to their improvement in English proficiency. Insufficient understanding of diverse cultures and limited language skills were significant obstacles that hindered learners' ability to engage in intercultural communication (Gedik, 2022). Rajaram (2023) stated that the differences in Oman students' proficiency in acquiring a foreign or second language are frequently related to cognitive, psychological, and sociocultural factors. Proficient language learners typically employ more personal beliefs and motivation than less skilled learners (Gedik, 2022).

Akkakoson (2019) explored Thai postgraduates' emotions and self-perception as they took on ASEAN's global English language learning. A qualitative approach was used to interview 44 English-related postgraduates using open-ended questions. The findings showed indigenous cultural values and norms motivate and inspire English language learners. According to Alyeksyeyeva et al. (2022), Master's students in Ukraine made sense of distinct second language (L2) writings. The results showed that English textbooks improve students' ability to communicate with people from diverse cultures, which promotes language acquisition. When faced with ambiguity or uncertainty, students often lack cultural awareness and make assumptions based on their first language (L1) to understand English. Ismailov (2021) examined the cultural impact on Japanese undergraduate students' English learning. The results suggest cultural awareness improved student involvement, learning, and intercultural communication confidence. These findings show that allowing students to investigate their culture may improve English language learning by expanding their cultural understanding.

2.4. English Language Assessment

Assessment in English language teaching can also benefit from cultural intelli-

gence. Assessments that consider cultural disparities and offer chances to showcase artistic expertise might be more reliable and equitable. [Presbitero et al. \(2020\)](#) stated that English language assessment may require students to examine and understand English language content within their cultural framework. The strategy enables students to exhibit their linguistic proficiency while highlighting their cultural comprehension. [Alyeksyeyeva et al. \(2022\)](#) investigated how Master's students in Ukraine comprehend different second language (L2) texts. The study contends that Ukrainian Master's students specializing in English should be provided with assignments relevant to their local context to improve their understanding of different cultures, enhance their ability to communicate across cultures, and be ready for ongoing learning of second language cultural patterns.

In their study, [Ambele and Boonsuk \(2021\)](#) endeavored to ascertain students' perspectives on the instruction of English in a lingua franca setting. The results were obtained through a semi-structured interview with 25 undergraduate students studying English at five universities in Southern Thailand. The results indicated that the majority of participants unanimously agreed that the main objective of ELT is to equip language learners with the necessary skills for effective communication with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds rather than requiring them to attain native-like proficiency in English ([Ambele & Boonsuk, 2021](#)). Therefore, student evaluation should not be focused solely on Inner Circle materials and cultures. Greater utilization of local content is suggested as it facilitates fair assessment of EFL learners when acquiring the English language.

Cultural intelligence tests can help educators assess students' intercultural competency and identify areas for improvement. Students' cultural intelligence can be set using several approaches, such as self-assessment questionnaires, cultural intelligence scales, and performance-based assessments ([Saud, 2019](#); [Shanti, 2020](#); [Tai & Zhao, 2022](#)). These assessments examine students' real-world cultural knowledge and skills. [Munandar and Newton \(2021\)](#) explored Indonesian EFL instructors' cultural and intercultural pedagogy and classroom practices. The study found that cultural intelligence assessment in English language classes allows teachers to give students targeted feedback. [Rajaram \(2023\)](#) proposes analyzing strengths and weaknesses to improve teaching approaches, enabling teachers to meet learners' needs in language acquisition.

2.5. Existing Challenges

Although CQ is crucial in English language instruction and acquisition, educators and learners may face various hurdles. Understanding these obstacles and applying efficient measures is essential for establishing an all-encompassing and culturally sensitive educational setting ([Gedik, 2022](#)). A significant obstacle encountered by individuals learning English is the linguistic barrier. Students may experience difficulties comprehending and expressing themselves in English due to disparities in pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar ([Alyeksyeyeva et al., 2022](#)). Teachers can overcome the language barrier by incorporating intercultur-

al communication skills into their instructional methods (Alqarni, 2023). Such an approach could offer students the chance to engage in genuine English language practice through activities such as group discussions, role-plays, and real-life situations (Saud, 2019). Students can cultivate a more profound comprehension of the English language and its cultural diversities by incorporating cultural components into language learning exercises.

Cultural misunderstandings may occur due to divergent attitudes and expectations between students and educators. These misconceptions can impede efficient communication and result in misinterpretations of the purpose and significance of language learning (Akkakoson, 2019). To address cultural misunderstandings, instructors should actively foster cultural sensitivity and enhance students' awareness of different cultures (Abumelha, 2023). The strategy can be implemented by engaging in conversations regarding cultural disparities, fostering empathy and reverence for varied viewpoints, and offering platforms for students to express their cultural encounters (Zou & Lertlit, 2022). By promoting an inclusive and culturally sensitive classroom atmosphere, educators can minimize the influence of cultural misconceptions on the teaching and acquisition of the English language (Chen & Zhang, 2022).

3. Methodology

3.1. The Rapid Review Design

A secondary research method based on the rapid review design formed the methodological basis of this study. There were no human subjects involved in the collection of primary data. Instead, secondary data was synthesized and examined to understand the impact of CQ on English Language teaching, learning, and assessment in Saudi universities. According to Haby et al. (2020), a rapid literature review is a concise and accelerated version of a literature review that seeks to offer a swift summary of current research on a particular subject. A fast review differs from traditional comprehensive literature reviews by prioritizing the quick synthesis of essential findings, evidence, and trends from a narrower selection of pertinent studies (Bond, 2021) rather than conducting a thorough and exhaustive analysis of a wide array of sources (Prete et al., 2020). A rapid review of this study was conducted to identify timely and valuable trends in CQ and its impact on English language teaching, learning, and assessment in Saudi universities.

3.2. Search Strategies

The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) framework developed by Ward et al. (2022) was used to guide this rapid review. Reputable academic databases consulted included Scopus, Google Scholar, JStor, and ERIC. Various Keywords and phrases were used in each academic database. These search strings had “cultural intelligence in EFL,” “Cultural intelligence and English teaching,” “Cultural intelligence and English learning

in Saudi Arabia,” “Cultural intelligence and English assessment,” “Cultural intelligence in Saudi English courses,” “CQ in SLA in Saudi Arabia colleges,” CQ and language teaching and learning,” and CQ in English assessment in Saudi Universities.” The publication period included studies published in the last five years (between January 2019 and January 2024). In the Saudi context, various studies have been identified.

The initial research on these academic websites identified literature reviews and primary studies on various fields such as education, linguistics, distance education, English as a foreign language (EFL), English as a second language (ESL), and English language teaching (ELT). The studies were published in journals such as the *Arab World English Journal*, *Journal of Education*, *World Journal of English Language*, *TESOL Quarterly*, and the *Journal of English*. The quality of the identified studies for this rapid review (as later discussed in the Selection Process) was achieved using Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI), Qualitative Assessment and Review Instrument (QARI) (JBI-QARI). **Table 1** presents detailed search keywords, phrases, and terms used to identify this study’s secondary studies. A combination of different keywords, search terms, or phrases was used across identified academic databases to achieve an exhaustive literature search and identify several studies on the topic.

For articles to be further evaluated and considered for assessment and inclusion in the final research, they had to contain at least three or more keywords in their Title, Abstract, or main text. However, there were notable discrepancies in the search terms and keywords used in each academic database during the search process. The discrepancies are attributed to the diversity of the subject headings used by the different scholarly databases. As a result, there was a need to use a combination of various phrases and keywords to achieve search optimization (i.e., to identify all the possible research articles related to the impact of CQ on English Language Teaching, Learning, and Assessment).

3.3. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria for Studies

Predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria were used to ensure that relevant studies were used to answer the research aim and questions. The inclusion or exclusion criteria were based on the research topic, type of study, period or year of publication, language publication, and country or region. **Table 2** presents the inclusion and exclusion criteria used in selecting articles. First, the research topic was about *the impact of cultural intelligence on English language teaching (ELT), learning (ELL), and assessment (ELA) in Saudi Universities*. The articles included were exclusively limited to the ones covering CQ in ELT, ELL, and ELA. In contrast, studies that did not cover CQ concerning either ELT, ELL, or ELA were excluded from the study.

Second, since this was a rapid review of literature focused on understanding current dynamics in CQ and its impacts on ELT, ELL, or ELA, there was a need to limit the study period. Therefore, only recent articles published within the last

Table 1. Search terms, keywords, and phrases used in the search process.

Search term Categories	Academic Databases				
	Google Scholar	Scopus	JStor	ERIC	Taylor and Francis, Emerald
Cultural intelligence	Cognitive CQ in English teaching in the Middle East, motivational CQ, Behavioral CQ in Saudi Arabia, Qatar	Cultural adaptation among EFL students, CQ metacognition in Iran, Iraq, and Yemen students	Emotional CQ in Saudi universities, cognitive and metacognitive CQ in KSA, Oman, Qatar, Yemen	Cognitive CQ in ESL courses, motivational CQ in Kuwait, Türkiye, and Lebanon	Cognitive CQ in Middle East Universities, motivational CQ in GCC universities, Behavioral CQ in Saudi universities
English language teaching	CQ impact ELT; CQ in language instruction; Cross-cultural awareness teaching; English Intercultural communicative competence	Cultural sensitivity English teachers; CQ teacher training; Cultural dimensions of language classroom	Cultural frameworks English curriculum; Cultural pragmatics English lessons; CQ in language instruction;	Cross-cultural awareness teaching; Culturally responsive English teaching; CQ impact ELT	Cultural adjustment English language programs; Cultural intelligence development ELT
English language Learning	CQ in language learning; CQ impact on ESL/EFL courses; Intercultural communicative competence	Cultural sensitivity, Cultural awareness, Cultural diversity in ESL/EFL	Cultural identity language learners in ESL/EFL courses in Saudi, UAE, Bahrain, and Yemen	Cultural intelligence English language learning; CQ impact on English acquisition	CQ impact on language acquisition; CQ English language aptitude; CQ impact on ESL/EFL courses;
English language Assessment	CQ impact English proficiency testing; Cross-cultural awareness English test bias	CQ English writing evaluation; CQ and English-speaking assessments	CQ impact on English reading; CQ impact on English speaking and comprehension	CQ English writing evaluation; CQ impact on English language test performance	CQ and English assessment interpretation; CQ impact on English comprehension
Results	89	53	66	67	78
Used Articles	13	7	5	8	7

Table 2. Inclusion and exclusion criteria for article selection.

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Topic	Discuss CQ in English language teaching, learning, and assessment	It does not include cultural competence or intelligence
Type	Peer reviews, primary studies, academic journals	Books, book reviews, internet, magazines, blogs, periodicals
Period	Articles published between 2020 and January 2024	Articles published before the year 2020 and below
Language	Articles and journals published in English language only	Articles published in non-English language
Region	Focused on EFL students and/or teachers in Saudi or colleges and universities in the Middle East region.	Focused on EFL/ESL settings in countries outside the Middle East, GCC, or non-Arabic regions

five years were included in the study. Restricting the search duration studies published between 2020 and May 2024 ensured the inclusion of current trends.

Including articles from the past five years ensures this rapid literature review was based on the latest findings, methodologies, and scholarly conversations. As such, this also helped avoid outdated information while addressing recent gaps in CQ in ESL courses in Saudi Arabian universities and other learning institutions in the Middle East Region.

Third, only high-quality and original primary articles were included in the study. The specific focus on the type of studies was on peer-reviewed, primary, and academic journals. Other secondary resources such as books, magazines, periodicals, internet sources, and blogs were excluded from the study. Peer-reviewed journals undergo rigorous review, provide current and in-depth research, adhere to scholarly standards, hold credibility, focus on specific topics, and are widely accessible (Bond, 2021; Haby et al., 2020). Therefore, this study preferred peer-reviewed journals over books, periodicals, and magazines.

Fourth, regarding the region, the researcher included studies on EFL /ESL learners and instructors in Saudi Arabian universities. For comparative analysis, studies from countries or regions that share cultural or educational characteristics similar to Saudi Arabia (e.g., Oman, UAE, Yemen, Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, and Türkiye) were included in the study. Such an inclusion was critical in providing richer insights into the universality and applicability of the findings. Lastly, the included studies were limited to those published only in English.

3.4. Selection Process for the Articles Reviewed

The JBI-QARI tool was used in the selection process for the articles reviewed in this rapid review. The peer-reviewed publications that met these inclusion criteria were further reviewed for their quality and relevance using the nine questions from the JBI-QARI critical appraisal checklist (Table 3). All identified studies were appraised for quality to determine their findings' relevance, trustworthiness, and quality concerning CQ's impact on English language teaching, learning, and assessment. The nine quality assessment questions relate to the following: Question 1 assesses whether the research aims are specified; Question 2

Table 3. Quality evaluation questions used to assess the extracted studies.

No.	Questions
1.	Are the research aims specified?
2.	Was the study designed to achieve these aims?
3.	Are the variables considered by the study specified?
4.	Is the study context/discipline specified?
5.	Are the data collection methods adequately detailed?
6.	Does the study explain the reliability/validity of the measures?
7.	Are the statistical techniques used to analyze the data adequately described?
8.	Do the results add to the literature?
9.	Does the study add to your knowledge or understanding

examines whether the identified studies are designed to achieve specific aims; Question 3 aims to identify if the variables considered by the researchers were specified; Question 4 attempts to determine whether the study discipline or context is clarified, and Question 5 focuses on appraising if the methods used to collect data are adequately elaborated. Moreover, Question 6 seeks to determine if the research explains the validity and reliability of used methods or survey measures; Question 7 explores if the data analysis methods are adequately detailed; Question 8 aims to assess if the study makes any contributions to the literature; Question 9 entails assessing any contributions made to existing knowledge or understanding of the topic under study. A total of 43 studies (**Appendix Table A1**) were included in the survey after JBI-QARI quality evaluation.

The researcher concluded that each component of the JBI-QARI played a crucial role in evaluating the methodological rigor and appraising the findings emerging from the study. Following the approach proposed by [Preti et al. \(2020\)](#), the quality assessment involved ranking each paper on a three-point scale: a score of 1 was assigned for a “Yes” response, 0 for a “No” response, and 0.5 for a “Partially” response. Consequently, each study received a cumulative score ranging from 0 to 9 based on this scoring criterion. Studies that garnered a higher cumulative score were deemed more effective in addressing the research question. **Appendix Table A1** presents the results of the quality assessment process, where higher scores of more than 7 indicate greater methodological rigor and relevance to the research topic.

Based on the JBI-QAR quality evaluation process, most studies scored above eight based on the nine questions. However, five qualitative studies scored 8.5 since they did not explain the reliability/validity of the measures (i.e., JBI-QAR Question 6). The five qualitative studies used interview questions were used in the studies. Yet, all the studies were of high quality based on JBI-QAR regarding having clear research aims and objectives. The studies used well-defined methods to accomplish those objectives. The variables under investigation in the identified studies were explicitly stated, and the study contexts were thoroughly described. The data collection methods were meticulously discussed, ensuring transparency. The measures’ reliability was established, lending credibility to the findings. Significantly, the identified studies contributed novel insights to the existing literature and enhanced the researchers’ comprehension of the subject matter.

3.5. Data Analysis

Collected peer-reviewed resources from various academic journal articles were manually analyzed and interpreted using inductive analysis (for qualitative studies) and deductive logic (for quantitative studies). Thematic analysis was conducted using the six-step process developed by [Braun and Clarke \(2023\)](#) involving a systematic approach to identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns within raw data from identified resources. The process began with familiariza-

tion with the data, where the focus was to immerse in the raw data to gain a comprehensive understanding of its content. This step allowed for the identification of potential themes and patterns.

Next, initial codes were systematically labeled relevant segments of the data. Using this step facilitated the organization and categorization of data into meaningful units. After coding, further search for themes followed by collating similar codes and identifying overarching patterns. These emergent themes were then reviewed and refined to ensure coherence and consistency. Subsequently, similar codes were grouped, defined, and named, creating clear and descriptive labels that captured the essence of each identified pattern.

The themes were then organized into a coherent structure, forming a thematic map illustrating their relationships. The step helped establish a robust foundation for analysis and interpretation. Lastly, a detailed report was produced, providing a comprehensive account of the identified themes, supported by illustrative vital issues and findings from the data. The six-step thematic analysis process by Braun and Clarke (2023) provided a rigorous and systematic framework, ensuring a methodical approach to extracting meaningful insights from data on the impact of CQ on English language teaching, learning, and assessment.

4. Findings

4.1. Results of the Search and Selection Process

Figure 1 presents the PRISMA flowchart of the article selection process. Initially, 353 articles were identified from the various academic databases (Table 1).

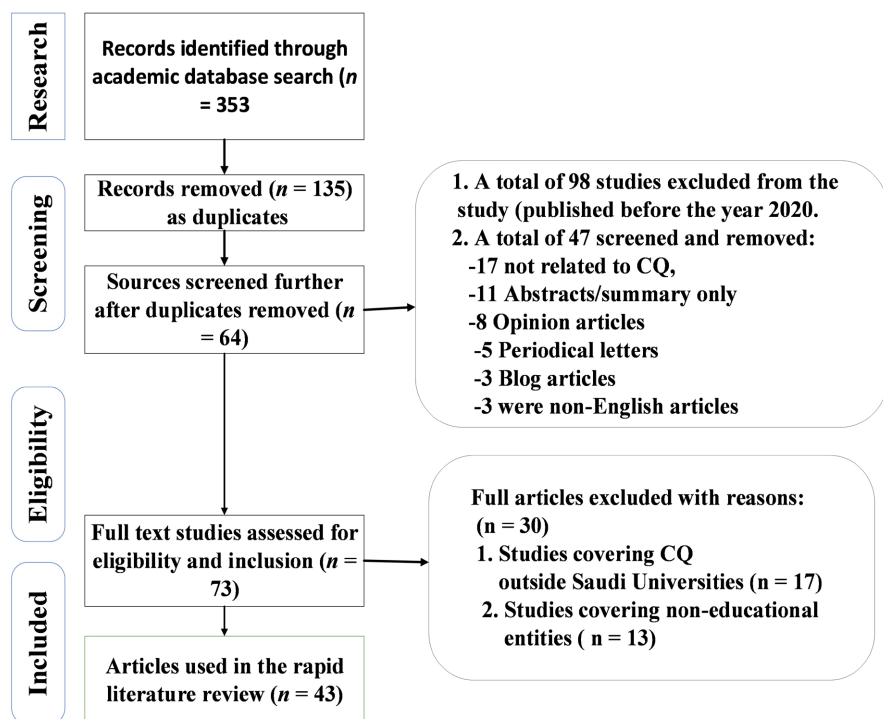


Figure 1. PRISMA flowchart of the article selection process.

Based on the analysis of the extracted studies led to removing 135 duplicated articles. Thus, 218 studies remained for further evaluation. Of the 218 studies, 98 were excluded since they were published before 2020. The remaining articles were 120, where an additional 47 studies were excluded (17 did not focus on CQ, 11 had abstracts only, 8 were opinion articles, 5 were periodicals, 3 were blogs, and 3 were non-English publications). As such, this led to 73 full-text articles that were assessed for eligibility and inclusion. However, 30 studies were excluded from the final inclusion; 17 out of these 30 studies were conducted outside Saudi Arabia and the Middle East region, and 13 focused on CQ in non-educational or university entities. Lastly, 43 articles were included in the rapid literature review.

4.2. Objective 1: CQ Impact on English Language Teaching

Objective 1 focused on evaluating *the impact of cultural intelligence on English language teaching among educators in Saudi Universities*. **Table 4** summarizes

Table 4. How CQ can impact English language teaching.

Theme	Subtheme	Sample Findings	References
Teaching Engagement	Adaptive teaching behaviors	-Teachers with high behavioral CQ adapt instructional methods to suit their students' cultural backgrounds. -This adaptability creates a more inclusive teaching environment, allowing students to engage with the English language.	Ahmed, 2022; Bin Towairesh, 2021; Abumelha, 2023; Mirghani, 2020
	Active participation	Teachers encourage active listening, note-taking, and time management for effective language learning and independent study.	Ali & Saleem, 2022; Alqarni, 2023
Attitude to teaching	Student engagement	-Teachers with high motivational CQ strategies encourage students to go beyond routine memorization and actively engage with the language.	Al Mukhallafi, 2019; Alenezi, 2020; Meniado, 2020;
	Committed to learning	-Teachers who make learning more engaging and relevant enable students to become more invested in their progress and develop a genuine desire to improve their English.	Ahmed, 2021; Alawfi, 2022; Al-khresheh, 2020
Lesson design	Diverse curriculum content	-Cognitive CQ strategies enable teachers to design lessons that promote critical thinking, problem-solving, and adaptability.	Dahmash, 2023; Elmahidi et al., 2023
Reflecting on teaching		-Metacognitive CQ strategies enable teachers to reflect on their teaching methods and adjust approaches based on cultural insights. -Metacognitive CQ leads to effective language instruction and improved learning outcomes.	Elmahidi et al., 2023; Omar et al., 2022; Saud, 2019
Interpersonal communication	Positive relations	-Teachers with strong interpersonal CQ facilitates a supportive learning environment, encourages collaboration, and provides opportunities for students to engage in authentic language use.	Ali & Saleem, 2022; Alqarni, 2023; Ahmed, 2022; Dahmash, 2023
Cultural awareness	Appropriate lesson plans	Cultural knowledge CQ highlights the importance of incorporating cultural awareness into English language teaching. Teachers can integrate information about diverse cultures, traditions, and perspectives into their lessons.	Bin Towairesh, 2021; Ahmed, 2021; Alawfi, 2022
	Cultural sensitivity	By fostering cultural sensitivity and understanding, students develop a deeper appreciation for the language and can communicate effectively with people from different backgrounds.	Alenezi, 2020; Meniado, 2020; Abumelha, 2023

key themes on how cultural intelligence enhances the efforts of teachers and educators in teaching the English language. The main themes identified relate to improved teaching engagement, positive attitude to teaching, improved lesson design, reflection on teaching, better interpersonal communication, and enhanced cultural awareness in lesson plans. First, four studies reported that teachers with high behavioral CQ create adaptive teaching methods that improve their curriculum and content delivery when teaching the English language (Abumelha, 2023; Ahmed, 2022; Bin Towairesh, 2021; Mirghani, 2020). Two studies noted that high CQ improves classroom engagement and creates active student participation (Ali & Saleem, 2022; Alqarni, 2023).

Second, findings from three studies revealed that Saudi teachers with high motivational CQ are better experienced in encouraging student engagement in EFL/ESL courses (Alenezi, 2020; Al Mukhallafi, 2019; Meniado, 2020). Motivated students go beyond routine memorization and actively engage with relevant curriculum content. The learners also better understand complex grammar, build varied vocabulary, and apply learned skills in different contexts. Three studies reported that Saudi teachers with high motivational CQ report their students to show high commitment to learning, such as the desire to improve their English language skills (Ahmed, 2021; Alawfi, 2022; Al-khresheh, 2020).

Third, four studies reported that Saudi teachers with high cognitive CQ could design diverse curriculum content (Dahmash, 2023; Elmahidi et al., 2023; Omar et al., 2022; Saud, 2019). Such teachers develop teaching methods, lesson plans, and strategies that promote critical thinking, problem-solving, and adaptability among EFL students. Also, Saudi educators with high cognitive CQ develop learning content that exposes EFL students in Saudi universities to different linguistic contexts. As a result, this helps EFL learners develop the cognitive skills necessary to navigate the complexities of the English language.

Fourth, three studies reported that Saudi teachers with high CQ effectively reflected on their teaching (Elmahidi et al., 2023; Omar et al., 2022; Saud, 2019). When educators show high metacognitive CQ strategies, they are in a position to reflect on their teaching methods. Besides, the teachers adjust their teaching and instruction approaches based on cultural insights relevant to Saudi students enrolled in EFL courses. Saud (2019) added that high metacognitive skills contribute to developing practical language instruction and improved learning outcomes.

Fifth, teachers with high intercultural competence can maintain relevant interpersonal communication in their EFL classrooms (Ahmed, 2022; Ali & Saleem, 2022; Alqarni, 2023; Dahmash, 2023). Specifically, Saudi teachers who possess strong interpersonal CQ are in a position to develop positive relationships with students from diverse backgrounds. Understanding learners' diverse cultures and backgrounds contributes to curriculum and lesson content development that is supportive and collaborative and provides opportunities for Saudi students to engage in authentic English language use.

Sixth, Saudi teachers' high cultural awareness impacts lesson planning and culturally sensitive learning content. Three studies showed that Saudi teachers with high cultural knowledge of CQ can integrate diverse cultural awareness content in their English language lessons (Ahmed, 2021; Alawfi, 2022; Bin Towairesh, 2021). Moreover, Saudi teachers with high cultural sensitivity enable students to appreciate better the English language (Alenezi, 2020; Meniado, 2020; Abumelha, 2023). Saudi students exposed to diverse cultures can communicate effectively with people from different backgrounds.

4.3. Objective 2: CQ Impact on English Language Learning

Objective 2 was formulated to determine the impact of cultural intelligence on English language learning among EFL students in Saudi Universities. Table 5

Table 5. How CQ can impact English language learning.

Theme	Subtheme	Sample Findings	References
Behavior change	Improved interaction	-Behavioral CQ methods help English language learners adapt their conversation, gestures, and expressions to English-speaking culture.	Elmahidi et al., 2023; Omar et al., 2022; Saud, 2019
	Active engagement	-Behavior change encourages consistent practice, active participation, and self-regulation, improving fluency and language retention. -Promotes setting achievable goals and tracking progress, fostering motivation and a sense of accomplishment.	Ahmed, 2022; Ali & Saleem, 2022; Alqarni, 2023; Dahmash, 2023
Interest in learning	Curiosity and enthusiasm	-Motivational CQ strategies can positively impact language learning by fostering curiosity and enthusiasm for the English language and its associated cultures.	Meniado, 2020; Mirghani, 2020; Bin Towairesh, 2021; Ahmed, 2021;
	Interest	Fosters a genuine interest in learning English, leading to sustained effort and greater engagement.	Abdulaziz & Almeshari, 2019
Problem-solving	Critical thinking	-Cognitive CQ strategies can enhance language learning by promoting critical thinking, problem-solving, and adaptability. -Learners can better navigate the complexities of English language use and understand idiomatic expressions.	Alzubi, 2022; Sakib, 2022; Bin Towairesh, 2021; Ahmed, 2021
	Analysis and synthesis	-Encourages learners to break down complex concepts, identify patterns, and build connections between different aspects of the language.	Ahmed, 2022; Bin Towairesh, 2021
Reflection on learning		-Metacognitive CQ strategies encourage learners to reflect on their language learning process, identify challenges, and adjust their approach based on cultural insights. -This can lead to more effective language acquisition and improved communication.	Al-khresheh, 2020; Al Mukhallafi, 2019; Alenezi, 2020;
Diverse culture context		-Cultural knowledge CQ strategies contribute to language learning by giving learners a deeper understanding of the cultural contexts in which English is used. -This knowledge facilitates more accurate and culturally appropriate language use, helping learners avoid misunderstandings and communicate more effectively.	Meniado, 2020; Elmahidi et al., 2023; Omar et al., 2022; Saud, 2019

presents key themes regarding how CQ can impact English language teaching among students. The themes relate to behavior change among students toward English learning, interest in learning English, problem-solving, personal reflection, and embracing diverse cultural contexts. Three studies reported that high CQ creates relevant language learning practices among Saudi students. Specifically, high behavioral CQ enables Saudi EFL students to adapt their conversation, gestures, and expressions to English-speaking culture (Elmahidi et al., 2023; Omar et al., 2022; Saud, 2019). Students show consistent practice, active participation, and self-regulation in EFL classrooms, improving fluency and language retention (Ahmed, 2022; Ali & Saleem, 2022; Alqarni, 2023; Dahmash, 2023).

Second, Saudi EFL learners with high motivational CQ will likely show greater interest, enthusiasm, and curiosity in learning English. Besides, learners with high motivational CQ are more likely to persist in their language studies, improving proficiency (Ahmed, 2021; Bin Towairesh, 2021; Meniado, 2020; Mirghani, 2020). Two studies also reported high learner motivation in CQ's genuine interest in learning English (Abdulaziz & Almeshari, 2019; Bin Towairesh, 2021). As a result, this leads to sustained effort among Saudi EFL learners and greater engagement with teachers or peers when learning the English language.

Third, students with high CQ show better problem-solving skills. For example, learners with high cognitive CQ have better critical thinking, problem-solving, and adaptability (Alzubi, 2022; Sakib, 2022). Saudi EFL learners with high cognitive CQ are also better at navigating the complexities of English language use, understanding idiomatic expressions, and grasping linguistic terms within different cultural contexts (Ahmed, 2021; Bin Towairesh, 2021). High CQ, therefore, contributes to better learning and acquisition of the English language among EFL students in Saudi Arabian universities.

Fourth, Saudi students with high CQ show high reflection on learning. Three studies found that learners with high metacognitive CQ are likely to reflect on their language learning process, identify challenges, and adjust their approach based on cultural insights (Alenezi, 2020; Al Mukhallafi, 2019; Al-khresheh, 2020). Regular reflection about English can lead to effective language acquisition and improved communication skills. Students also regularly engage more with the English language outside the classroom than peers who lack reflective practice with English content they have learned or been exposed to in their EFL courses (Al-khresheh, 2020).

Fifth, students with diverse cultural knowledge understand other cultures outside their own. Having relevant intercultural knowledge, CQ will likely contribute to better English language learning (Meniado, 2020; Saud, 2019). Specifically, students can access a deeper understanding of the cultural contexts in which the English language is used, enabling them to apply it to their local cultures (Elmahidi et al., 2023; Omar et al., 2022). Access to diverse cultures enables students to acquire accurate and culturally appropriate language use experiences, enabling EFL learners to avoid cross-cultural misunderstandings and communicate more effectively with others outside their culture.

4.4. Objective 3: CQ Impact on English Language Teaching

Objective 3 aligned with identifying how cultural intelligence influences English language assessment in the context of Saudi Universities. **Table 6** presents how CQ can impact English language assessment. The main themes relate to the impact of CQ in assessment in enabling educators to monitor learners' participation, evaluate student commitment levels, determine individual ability and inability, and identify learning gaps that require improvements. First, three studies showed that Saudi teachers with high CQ could effectively monitor learners' participation in the EFL curriculum (Alqarni, 2023; Dahmash, 2023; Elmahidi et al., 2023).

Teachers could monitor student attendance in EFL courses, classroom participation, and English acquisition processes through appropriate observational assessments. The use of self-assessment tools was important in help teachers assess student behavior and learning achievement, offering valuable data for self-improvement and examination assessment (Dahmash, 2023).

In line with **Table 6**, Saudi teachers with high CQ were able to evaluate how learners from different cultural backgrounds engage with EFL lessons. Four studies documented that teachers with multicultural competes assess student interest, curiosity, and enjoyment of English language learning tasks (Alawfi, 2022; Sakib, 2022; Omar et al., 2022; Saud, 2019). In the process, teachers can map students' internal drive and potential for long-term success in English language

Table 6. How CQ can impact English language learning.

Theme	Subtheme	Sample Findings	References
Monitoring learners' participation		-Observational assessments help teachers monitor student attendance, participation, and study habits.	Alqarni, 2023;
		-Self-assessment tools can help assess student behavior and learning achievement, offering valuable data for self-improvement and examination assessment.	Dahmash, 2023; Elmahidi et al., 2023;
Evaluate student commitment	Student interest	-Assessing student interest, curiosity, and enjoyment of learning tasks can reveal their internal drive and potential for long-term success.	Alawfi, 2022; Sakib, 2022; Omar et al., 2022; Saud, 2019
	Goal orientation	-Evaluating the setting and pursuit of personal goals can indicate students' commitment, initiative, and self-efficacy in language learning.	Bin Towaireh, 2021; Ahmed, 2021; Alawfi, 2022;
	Attitude surveys	Gauging learners' confidence, anxiety, and perceptions of English language learning can inform adjustments to instruction and provide insights into potential roadblocks.	Al-khresheh, 2020; Al Mukhallafi, 2019; Alenezi, 2020
Individual Ability		-CQ impacts assessment as teachers can evaluate and determine students' abilities and current shortcomings in English language learning	Abdulaziz & Almeshari, 2019; Alzubi, 2022
Identify learning gaps		-Analyzing students' reflections on their learning process can identify challenges and inform solutions to address barriers to English language learning	Abumelha, 2023; Mirghani, 2020; Ahmed, 2022

acquisition. Three studies revealed that by understanding students' diversity, teachers develop content that aligns with students' commitment, initiative, and self-efficacy in language learning (Bin Towairesh, 2021; Ahmed, 2021; Alawfi, 2022).

Insights from three studies showed that high CQ helps determine individual ability in English language learning (Abdulaziz & Almeshari, 2019; Alzubi, 2022). Teachers can assess the impact of students' first language and cultural setting on EFL students' learning process. Culturally aware Saudi teachers can evaluate and determine students' abilities and current shortcomings in English language learning. Similarly, three studies noted that high CQ enables teachers to identify potential learning gaps among EFL students (Abumelha, 2023; Ahmed, 2022; Mirghani, 2020). Analyzing students' learning process helps identify potential challenges they are exposed to, and this informs solutions to address barriers to English language learning.

4.5. Comparative Analysis with Other Middle Eastern Countries

Identified literature further included research on the impact of cultural intelligence on English language teaching, learning, and assessment in other countries across the Middle East and the Gulf Region. These countries included the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Oman, Bahrain, Qatar, Iraq, Iran, Türkiye, and Yemen. The inclusion of these countries was informed by the fact that they share cultural characteristics similar to those of Saudi Arabia. Findings from various middle east countries are important because they provide richer insights into the universality and applicability of the cultural intelligence findings. **Table 7** summarizes key Middle East studies concerning how CQ impacts English language teaching, learning, and assessment.

4.6. The Impact of CQ on English Language Teaching across the Middle East

Findings from the Middle East region reveal similar trends to the results from the Saudi Arabian studies. Six studies showed that across the Middle East, teachers with high CQ tend to deliver improved content, create culturally appropriate instruction, and have competency and self-efficacy in English language teaching (Al-Hazmi, 2023; Astifo, 2023; Hejash, 2021; Qadhi & Abu-Shawish, 2020; Pazinas, 2021; Razavi & Gilakjani, 2020). Hejash (2021) assessed the cultural differences Yemeni English teachers encounter in foreign language teaching. Teachers shared that cultural awareness is important in promoting English language learning and teaching quality. However, there is a need for remedial methods to address cultural confusion and associated negative impacts that hinder language teaching. Similar observations were made by Al-Hazmi (2023), who conducted a descriptive study to explore the efficiency of English language teacher preparation programs in line with TESOL standards. The researchers collected data from 141 male and female EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia. Results showed that cultural intelligence in English language teaching is important for

Table 7. How CQ can impact English language teaching, learning, and assessment.

Theme	Countries	Sample Findings	References
Improved student learning	UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait	Metacognitive and cognitive strategies were frequently applied in EFL learning.	El-Maamiry (2020)
Improves EFL performance	Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Oman	CQ types like emotional, behavioral, and cognitive influence learning style preferences, which impact students' performance in EFL courses across the Arabian Gulf region	Gabriel (2023)
CQ impacts students' reading.	UAE	Classroom practices and cultural environment impact the reading achievement of students.	Maluch (2021)
CQ awareness improves learning.	Oman	Intercultural awareness generated new and transformative approaches to English learning, reducing conflict and creating hegemony.	Burns & Danaher (2020)
CQ impacts the English proficiency.	Iraq	Iraq EFL students have high cognitive and behavioral CQ, with a direct relationship between CQ and language proficiency.	Mohammed & Al-Bakri (2022)
EFLs have a higher CQ than ESL learners	Iran	EFL students had higher metacognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioral CQ than medical students.	Karami & Izadpanah (2022)
Students have different CQ levels.	Türkiye	Students have higher motivational & metacognitive CQs than cognitive & behavioral CQs.	Şenel (2020)
Learners have high CQs.	Türkiye	Students have high metacognitive, motivational, and behavioral CQ but moderate cognitive CQ.	Bal (2022)
Improves adoption of social changes	Saudi Arabia	Cultural intelligence in English language teaching is important for adapting to social changes in universities.	Al-Hazmi (2023)
CQ influences content and curriculum design.	UAE	CQ, such as motivational, cognitive, and metacognitive aspects similar to commercial publishers, influenced teachers' perception of English language teaching.	Pazinas (2021)
CQ increases teachers' efficacy in teaching.	Qatar	Exposure to CQ correlates with improved teacher competency in English language teaching, comprehension, and accents	Qadhi & Abu-Shawish (2020)
CQ effects language learning.	Iraq	Ideological complexities and cultural complications negatively impact students' acquisition of applied English linguistics.	Astifo (2023)
Curricular includes CQ	UAE, Oman, Bahrain, Saudi, Qatar	The cognitive dimension is the most widely used CQ in educational institutions for EFL and social learning, teaching, and assessment.	Ang et al. (2020)

adapting to social changes in Middle Eastern universities and local Saudi contexts. However, there are statistically significant differences in teachers' CQ levels due to differences in programs for preparing EFL teachers. The differences were attributed to varying colleges and universities from which EFL teachers graduate.

Pazinas (2021) conducted a case study to identify the cultural determinants that affect pedagogical decisions in curriculum design. UAE teachers were recruited into the study, and results showed that CQ affects the pedagogical decisions of teachers when designing content. CQ, such as motivational, cognitive, and metacognitive aspects similar to commercial publishers, influenced teachers'

thinking. Qadhi and Abu-Shawish (2020) examined the relationship between cultural exposure and teachers' competence. The researchers surveyed EFL Teachers in Qatar. Findings showed a significant correlation between teachers' exposure to English language cultures and improved competency, including language comprehension and accent development.

Astifo (2023) assessed the cultural issues that the students face during language learning processes. Teachers in an English department at Kurdistan/Erbil Universities were surveyed to share their experiences. Results revealed that ideological complexities and cultural complications have a negative impact on students' acquisition of applied English linguistics. Teachers felt a greater need for cultural awareness among teachers and students (Astifo, 2023). Razavi and Gilakjani (2020) examined the effect of teaching cultural-relevant content to Iranian EFL students at the intermediate level and its effect on their reading comprehension. Sixty students from the Shokouh Institute in Motelqu, Iran, participated in the study. A quasi-experiment was used with pretest and posttest groups in a six-month study. Teachers felt that students who received culturally relevant content instruction improved their reading comprehension and had a higher cognition and behavioral CQ level than the control group.

4.7. The Impact of CQ on English Language Learning in the Middle East Region

Analysis of eight studies from across the Middle East region further complements insights from Saudi studies in that high CQ enhances English learning among Arabic-speaking EFL students (Bal, 2022; Burns & Danaher, 2020; El-Maamiry, 2020; Gabriel, 2023; El-Maamiry, 2020; Maluch, 2021; Mohammed & Al-Bakri, 2022; Şenel, 2020). These studies were conducted in various GCC countries, such as UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, and Yemen. These findings echo observations from various studies conducted in different universities in Saudi Arabia. For example, El-Maamiry (2020) conducted a cross-sectional study to assess how culture affects students' learning. The researchers collected data from 70 GCC university students in UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait. Findings showed that high cognitive CQ among students significantly affects their EFL information needs, language queries, and assignment execution. Metacognition and cognitive CQ were frequently applied when learning, especially among undergraduate students (El-Maamiry, 2020). Karami and Izadpanah (2022) examined cultural intelligence in Iranian EFL and ESP learners. The researchers recruited 116 EFL and 207 ESP students from Zanzan and Islamic Azad Universities to participate in the study. EFL students were found to have more CQ in terms of metacognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioral knowledge than medical students. The findings emphasize the importance of cultural factors in classes.

Gabriel (2023) made similar observations. In his study, Gabriel (2023) examined whether there is a correlation between learning preference and culture

among Arab-speaking college students in the Gulf Region. Results showed that cultural intelligence types like emotional, behavioral, and cognitive influence learning style preferences. These CQs impact the performance of collect students in EFL courses across the Arabian Gulf region, including Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Oman (Gabriel, 2023). Similarly, CQ not only affects general academic performance but also enhances student's reading progress. Maluch (2021) surveyed UAE Arabic- and English-speaking fourth graders. The researchers assessed the differences in social and CQ contexts among these learners in EFL settings. Results showed that classroom practices and cultural environment impact students' reading achievement. However, the researchers did not identify a specific CQ commonly used among students and how it affected their reading.

Students who have high CQ show strong cultural tolerance and English language acquisition. Burns and Danaher (2020) examined female undergraduate students' experience with interculturality in Oman's English language courses. The researchers collected data from students at Dhofar University. Intercultural awareness generated new and transformative approaches to English learning, reducing conflict and creating hegemony. Mohammed and Al-Bakri (2022) conducted a correlational study to examine the language proficiency and CQ among Iraqi EFL University Students. A total of 400 students participated in the study. Results showed that CQ and language proficiency are significantly correlated. Iraqi EFL University students were found to possess a good cognitive and behavioral CQ level.

Bal (2022) examined the CQ of Turkish English language learners and their proficiency in intercultural communication. Results showed EFL students had high metacognitive, motivational, and behavioral CQ levels but moderate cognitive. Şenel (2020) examined the CQ levels of students at a foreign language department at a Turkish University. Scholars recruited 200 French, German, and English students at Mayıs University. Students differed significantly in their CQ depending on the type of department and high schools they graduated from. Students showed higher metacognitive and motivational CQ than cognitive and behavioral CQ.

4.8. The Impact of CQ on English Language Assessment in the Middle East Universities

Ang et al. (2020) examined cultural intelligence in higher education institutions and systems in the UAE, Oman, Bahrain, Saudi, and Qatar. Results showed that regional learning institutions often include CQ dimensions such as motivational, cognitive, and behavioral in their curriculums. However, cognitive is the most included dimension, at over 25%. In Saudi Arabia, the cognitive dimension is the most widely included in EFL studies, accounting for 14%. Bal (2022) noted that CQ creates self-efficacy and competency among educators, impacting instruction delivery and teaching methods among Turkish learners. Besides, Al-Hazmi (2023) noted that teachers with high CQ in English language teaching favorably adapt to social changes when teaching EFL students in their universities. Similar

observations have been made by Pazinas (2021), who shared that cognitive and metacognitive CQ significantly influence how teachers design course content and deliver curriculum instruction. As such, high CQ ensures they can assess students' needs and EFL requirements while designing tailored instructions.

Qadhi and Abu-Shawish (2020) added that CQ increases teachers' efficacy in teaching and understanding English curriculum requirements. Thus, educators are in a position to assess various learning contexts and determine students' strengths and weaknesses. Astifo (2023) cautioned that lack of CQ in EFL settings may negatively affect English language evaluation, hindering desired student learning outcomes. These findings show that high CQ in educators and students can enhance their assessment of language learning progress or performance. Specifically, this is achieved through a better understanding of cultural variations, identification of biases, adaptation to diverse assessment formats, creation of suitable cross-cultural relations, and accurate interpretation of cultural references. EFL teachers and instructors with high CQ may design more culturally sensitive assessments, providing a fairer evaluation for culturally diverse students across the Middle East. These findings echo observations made by Saudi Studies relating to CQ's impact in enabling teachers to tailor instruction to individual student needs while tracking learners' academic progress.

4.9. CQ Impact on the English Language within Saudi Arabian Educational Institutions

Analysis of studies within the Saudi education institutions shows disparity in research comparisons. For example, most studies have focused on public universities, with few assessing how CQ impacts EFL students' English language acquisition. Based on the identified studies were all conducted in public universities, including *Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University*, *King Khalid University*, *Northern Border University* (Arar), *Tabuk University*, *King Abdul Aziz University*, and *Imam Mohammad ibn Saud Islamic University*. However, most studies did not mention the specific name of the university where they were conducted, making it difficult to compare private and public educational institutions in Saudi Arabia. **Table 8** presents the comparative analysis of CQ's impact on English language learning and teaching in Saudi Universities.

Comparative analysis from Saudi Universities shows that most students use metacognitive CQ in English language learning (Alqarni, 2023; Dahmash, 2023). Metacognition is followed by other cultural intelligence strategies such as compensation, cognitive, affective, social, and memory. However, other researchers share that behavioral CQ is the most commonly used, followed by cognitive and emotional engagement in EFL courses (Alawfi, 2022). Other researchers report that Saudi university EFL students tend to have high emotional and cognitive CQ, which is significantly associated with their English achievement level (Saud, 2019).

The level of EFL student understanding is higher when delivered by Native English-speaking lecturers than in non-native English-speaking lectures

Table 8. Analysis of the impact of CQ on English language in Saudi universities.

University	Finding	Reference
Northern Border University	Metacognitive is the most used CQ in language learning, followed by compensation, cognitive, affective, social, and memory strategies.	Alqarni (2023)
Universities in Riyadh	Metacognitive CQ strategy is the most used by EFL students, while affective and memory strategies are the least common.	Dahmash (2023)
Tabuk University as a case study	There are high levels of behavioral CQ followed by cognitive and emotional engagement in EFL courses.	Alawfi (2022)
King Abdulaziz University (KAU)	The level of student understanding is high when delivered by Native English-speaking lecturers.	Ali & Saleem Alqurashi (2022)
Northern Border University (Arar)	IT and Pharmacy students have higher intercultural skills than science and Arts students in EFL online learning.	Alenezi (2020)
Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University	Students believe that culture and language are related and influence English language vocabulary and syntactic structure learning.	Abdulaziz & Almeshari (2019)
King Khalid University	Students have high emotional CQ, which is significantly associated with their English achievement level.	Saud (2019)
KAU and Imam Mohammad ibn Saud Islamic University	Students show greater interest in learning the English language and embrace a multicultural approach to learning.	Al Mukhallafi (2019)
Saudi EFL Students in various universities	Metacognitive and cognitive strategies are the frequently used CQs, and effective is the least used.	Abumelha (2023)
EFL teachers in Saudi public universities	Cultural awareness is of significance to the effectiveness of EFL teachers, with behavioral, cognitive, and metacognitive CQs commonly applied in teaching.	Alzubi (2022)
Saudi Students in American universities	Cultural diversity awareness is one fact that contributes to healthier adjustment and greater successful acquisition of a second language among Saudi students.	Ahmed (2021)
EFL teachers at an academic institution in Saudi Arabia	Learning-oriented cultural assessment of EFL teachers in higher education is poorly adopted and executed in second-language settings	Ahmed (2022)
Saudi EFL undergraduate students	The cultural component is lacking in most language teaching and less satisfactory for English major students.	Bin Towairish (2021)
Saudi University EFL Students	EQ positively impacts the motivational teaching and learning practices of Saudi EFL students.	Sakib (2022)

(Ali & Saleem Alqurashi, 2022). Therefore, the studies reveal the potential role that intercultural competency plays in facilitating English language teaching and learning (Alenezi, 2020; Waterkeyn, 2021). Saudi EFL students believe that culture and language are related, and they influence English language vocabulary and syntactic structure learning (Abdulaziz & Almeshari, 2019). However, while native English teachers in Saudi Arabia effectively teach English, there is a need to consider cultural differences when teaching English (Alotaibi & Alharbi, 2022), and bilingual methods should be avoided (Abu, 2023).

Some researchers reported that EFL students in Saudi universities perceive native English-speaking teachers as outstanding at speaking, listening, reading, and teaching (Waterkeyn, 2021), while non-native English-speaking teachers

excel in writing, reading, and grammar (Hamarai, 2021; Haque & Sharmin, 2022). Ibrahim (2022) reported that various CQ dimensions are present in Saudi textbooks, with cognitive and motivational cultural intelligence being the most included. However, there is a disparity between different book units. Alshenqeeti (2020) noted that CQ in Saudi universities may be improved by ensuring EFL textbooks in Saudi Arabia have a balanced cultural representation. Similarly, Aldosari and Alrefai (2020) emphasized integrating culture into foreign language teaching courses in Saudi Arabian universities.

5. Discussion

This paper aims to understand how CQ impacts English language teaching, learning, and assessment in Saudi universities. The literature reveals that CQ has been explored in different contexts in Saudi Arabia and across Middle Eastern universities. Some common issues discussed in the literature include cross-cultural competence, intercultural competence, cultural awareness, cultural sensitivity, and global mindset (Abumelha, 2023; Mirghani, 2020; Bin Towairesh, 2021). While the topic is developing in terms of its impact on English teaching, learning, and assessment, important themes emerge from peer-reviewed journals to help understand the topic. When exploring CQ's impact on English teaching, insights from the reviewed literature show that Saudi teachers with high cultural awareness adapt their teaching methods to students' cultural backgrounds, making lessons more relevant and engaging (Alqarni, 2023; Meniado, 2020; Bin Towairesh, 2021).

EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia and across the Middle East universities with high CQ are more likely to show strong sensitivity to cultural values (Ali & Saleem, 2022) and avoid misinterpretations or misunderstandings that hinder learning (Al-khresheh, 2020). Further, scholars also show that teachers with in-depth cultural awareness and a global mindset tend to have an enhanced understanding of student needs (Abumelha, 2023; Mirghani, 2020). As such, these teachers design and implement better teaching styles that align with the cultural sensitivities of their Saudi students. Ahmed (2022) noted that high knowledge about student backgrounds and norms allows educators in institutions of higher learning to tailor their English teaching methods and materials to be more effective and engaging. Teachers with cross-cultural and intercultural competence can also incorporate culturally relevant content, such as suitable themes, examples, and references from Saudi culture, into the curriculum, making learning more meaningful and relatable for students (Alawfi, 2022).

Sociocultural incorporation of student values into the curriculum can boost engagement and motivation, leading to better learning outcomes (Ahmed, 2021). According to Bin Towairesh (2021), teachers with relevant cultural exposure can create intercultural activities and discussions, enriching the English learning environment and fostering global citizenship. There are reduced communication barriers in the process since CQ can help teachers become more

adept at interpreting nonverbal cues and understanding the values of Saudi communication styles. Multicultural activities in English language teaching foster a more open and productive classroom environment where students feel comfortable expressing themselves (Alenezi, 2020; Meniado, 2020; Abumelha, 2023). Besides, teachers with diverse cultural exposure are more likely to select course materials that are culturally sensitive and inclusive

CQ also impacts English language learning in Saudi universities and academic institutions across the GCC member countries like UAE, Oman, Yemen, and Bahrain. However, the scholarly literature shows that Saudi university students have medium language learning strategies and cultural intelligence (Al Mukhalafi, 2019; Alenezi, 2020). Similar to the findings by Gedik (2022) on Turkish students, Omar et al. (2022) observed that metacognitive and behavioral methods are most common among Saudi students, while cognitive strategies are the least applied. English language strategy uses and CQ, especially metacognitive, correlate positively. The study supports direct cultural awareness and strategy education in language courses. Socio-pedagogical EFL instruction can also improve Saudi university EFL difficulties. Critical pedagogy can raise students' understanding of English variants and attitudes toward linguistic variety. AI can potentially improve English language teaching and learning, but it needs better integration into education.

Analysis of existing literature further shows that the significant impact of CQ on English language acquisition in Saudi colleges is being established. Ahmed (2021) emphasized the benefits of explicit instruction on cultural awareness and strategic utilization in language classes, highlighting the importance of integrating CQ into language training. Moreover, Alawfi (2022) advocated the necessity for EFL teachers to implement a socio-pedagogical approach to language training, as it may successfully tackle hurdles experienced by students in SLA courses. Saudi college EFL instructors are recommended to integrate cultural norms and communication patterns into their teaching while also ensuring that students are equipped with the necessary resources to understand the language (Dahmash, 2023; Elmahidi et al., 2023; Omar et al., 2022; Saud, 2019).

Findings also revealed that CQ helps EFL students in various universities comprehend and communicate in real-world situations. Language acquisition includes cultural intricacies, idiomatic words, nonverbal communication signs, and more (Omar et al., 2022; Saud, 2019). By developing cultural understanding and language abilities, Saudi students gain confidence in utilizing English in varied social circumstances. Students are more motivated and engaged in learning when their culture is valued and expressed in the classroom (Elmahidi et al., 2023). Thus, language learning and academic performance may improve among Saudi Students. By understanding the cultural context of language usage, students can better understand English's cultural norms and values, improving communication using the target language (Abumelha, 2023). In this light, it may be concluded that CQ enhances students' ability to successfully express themselves and engage in meaningful cross-cultural discussions by developing inter-

cultural communication skills.

CQ enhances assessments by offering a more comprehensive approach to evaluating language proficiency. [Ahmed \(2022\)](#) cautioned that conventional evaluations generally prioritize linguistic precision but may neglect cultural suitability or sociolinguistic proficiency. By enhancing their cultural intelligence, assessors can create tests encompassing a broader language proficiency perspective ([Ahmed, 2021](#); [Alawfi, 2022](#)). For example, this may entail undertaking tasks that necessitate comprehending certain cultural references or showcasing aptitude in cross-cultural communication. The influence of cultural intelligence on English language instruction assessment in Saudi universities has been substantial among teachers. [Meniado \(2020\)](#) remarked that developing cross-cultural awareness enables teachers to analyze student performance, considering various cultural factors effectively.

Assessments can be created to gauge CQ directly, offering significant insights into students' international aptitudes. Conventional assessment methods may not be appropriate for students from diverse cultural backgrounds ([Bin Towairesh, 2021](#)). By integrating CQ principles, educators can create evaluation instruments that are more equitable and precise, considering cultural variations ([Ali & Saleem, 2022](#)). [Alqarni \(2023\)](#) emphasized the development of effective communication abilities. That is, evaluating students' capacity to communicate effectively in English within diverse cultural settings can provide a more significant evaluation of their expertise than conventional assessments focused on grammar and vocabulary. CQ assessment could also promote self-reflection by urging students to contemplate their cultural prejudices and preconceptions, enhancing their proficiency as English language learners and communicators ([Ahmed, 2022](#); [Dahmash, 2023](#)).

6. Limitations and Avenues for Future Research

Potential limitations associated with the study could affect the interpretation of the results. First, the information used in this study was drawn from secondary data from peer-reviewed studies. There was no primary data from interviews and surveys, limiting the results since most studies focused on different research aims and questions from this rapid review. There is a need for further research to improve on the current findings by using primary data such as surveys, interviews, focus group discussions, and field observations. Second, the rapid review method only focused on recent studies. There is limited research scope since the study did not include other relevant findings from prior years. Also, the findings of this rapid review may not apply to future dynamic changes on the topic. Third, most resources used in this rapid review were cross-sectional and limited to individual public universities. Future studies may improve on the findings by triangulating data sources across different private and public universities, conducting longitudinal and experimental studies, and including diverse or representative sample sizes to ensure the generalization of the findings. Longitudinal

studies would also help establish causality between different CQ and English language teaching, learning, and assessment among EFL students in Saudi Arabia and across the Middle East.

7. Conclusion

Insights from this paper reveal that CQ plays a pivotal role in shaping the landscape of English language teaching, learning, and assessment within Saudi Arabian EFL courses. The impact of cultural intelligence is multifaceted, influencing educators and learners in profound ways. In the context of teaching, teachers who possess a high level of CQ are more adept at effectively managing the different cultural backgrounds of their students. Comprehending local conventions, attitudes, and communication styles is vital in dealing with Saudi university EFL learners. Teachers with cultural intelligence can adapt their teaching methods to align with Saudi Arabian pupils' cultural sensitivities, creating a more inclusive learning atmosphere conducive to effective learning.

For English language learners, CQ improves their capacity to understand and communicate in the target language within a global framework. Being exposed to various cultural views enhances language acquisition by giving learners a more comprehensive grasp of idiomatic expressions, subtle language usage, and sociocultural settings. Furthermore, a culturally aware approach enables learners to effectively overcome potential language obstacles and develop their ability to communicate across other cultures. Therefore, this prepares them to engage in real-life interactions in a world that is becoming more interconnected.

Educators aim to provide culturally sensitive and equitable evaluations influenced by cultural intelligence. In elaboration, this entails understanding and valuing various learning styles, recognizing the influence of cultural backgrounds on language competency, and employing evaluation methods that align with a worldwide viewpoint. In conclusion, CQ has a transformative impact on English language instruction in Saudi universities. In elaboration, CQ enhances pedagogical techniques, enhances the educational experience for learners, and guarantees equitable and culturally aware evaluations. Promoting CQ in Saudi Arabian institutions that offer EFL courses could enhance the preparation of learners for success in a globally interconnected society by incorporating cultural intelligence into English language instruction, thereby fostering linguistic and cultural competence.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

References

- Abdulaziz, A., & Almeshari, F. (2019). Effects of Learning Culture on English-Language Learning for Saudi EFL Students. *Arab World English Journal*, 10, 330-343. <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol10no3.23>

- Abu, M. (2023). The Effective Native Teacher of English Language in Saudi Arabia EFL Classroom. *International Journal of English Language Teaching*, 8, 56-67. <https://doi.org/10.37745/ijelt.13/vol11n11633>
- Abumelha, M. (2023). Strategy Use, Cultural Intelligence, and English Language Proficiency of Undergraduate Saudi Students. *Arab World English Journal*, 14, 30-47. <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol14no2.3>
- Ahmed, M. (2021). Cross-Cultural Adjustment and Second Language Acquisition. *International Journal of Language and Literary Studies*, 3, 290-300. <https://doi.org/10.36892/ijlls.v3i2.646>
- Ahmed, M. (2022). Investigating Saudi EFL University Teachers' Knowledge in Adopting Learning-Oriented Assessment. *World Journal of English Language*, 13, 121-130. <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v13n1p121>
- Akkakoson, S. (2019). Thai Language Learners' Sense of English Ownership. *PASAA: Journal of Language Teaching and Learning in Thailand*, 58, 235-262. <https://doi.org/10.58837/CHULA.PASAA.58.1.9>
- Al Mukhallafi, T. R. (2019). Attitudes and Usage of MALL among Saudi University EFL Students. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 9, 407-420. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v9n1p407>
- Alawfi, N. (2022). English Language Learning Difficulties in Saudi Arabia: Tabuk University as a Case Study. *Journal of English*, 33, 139-168. <https://doi.org/10.21608/jwadi.2022.213398>
- Aldosari, H., & Alrefai, I. (2020). Exploring the Role of Cultural Teaching in EFL College Programs: An Introspective Study. *International Journal of Language and Linguistics*, 8, 174-179. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ijll.20200804.18>
- Alenezi, A. (2020). The Relationship of Students' Emotional Intelligence and the Level of Their Readiness for Online Education: A Contextual Study on the Example of University Training in Saudi Arabia. *The Education and Science Journal*, 22, 89-109. <https://doi.org/10.17853/1994-5639-2020-4-89-109>
- Al-Hazmi, S. (2023). EFL Teacher Preparation Programs in Saudi Arabia: Trends and Challenges. *TESOL Quarterly*, 37, 341-344. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3588509>
- Ali, H., & Saleem Alqurashi, H. (2022). The Impact of Teaching Approaches on Students' English Language Learning in Higher Education: A Case Study of a Saudi University. *Arab World English Journal*, 13, 3-19. <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol13no3.1>
- Al-khresheh, M. H. (2020). The Impact of Cultural Background on Listening Comprehension of Saudi EFL Students. *Arab World English Journal*, 11, 349-371. <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol11no3.22>
- Alotaibi, K. A., & Alharbi, M. G. (2022). Assessing the Learning Outcomes of Using Mobile Game Integration in Teaching English Vocabulary: A Case Study of Saudi Arabia. *International Journal of Sociotechnology and Knowledge Development (IJSKD)*, 14, 1-16.
- Alqarni, N. (2023). Language Learning Strategies and Learning Engagement as Predictors of Language Learning Achievement: An Investigation of Saudi EFL Learners. *Saudi Journal of Language Studies*, 3, 129-143. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SJLS-12-2022-0084>
- Alshenqeeti, H. (2020). Representation of Culture in EFL Textbooks and Learners' Preference. *Pedagogy: Journal of English Language Teaching*, 3, 92-95. <https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/3z8hc>
- Alyeksyeyeva, I., Chaiuku, T., Kovalchuk, I., & Galitska, E. (2022). Making Sense of Texts: EFL Students' Intercultural Competence and Interpretation Depth. *Arab World Eng-*

- lish Journal*, 13, 104-116. <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol13no1.7>
- Alzubi, A. (2022). What Makes an Effective EFL Teacher from a Saudi Preuniversity Students' Perspective? *Journal of Education*, 202, 507-515. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022057420988702>
- Ambele, E., & Boonsuk, Y. (2021). Voices of Learners in Thai ELT Classrooms: A Wake-Up Call towards Teaching English as a Lingua Franca. *Asian Englishes*, 23, 201-217. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13488678.2020.1759248>
- Ang, S., Dyne, L., & Rockstuhl, T. (2020). Cultural Intelligence. *The International Encyclopedia of Higher Education Systems and Institutions*, 8, 787-792.
- Astifo, D. (2023). A Study of the Cultural Intricacies That the Students Face during Language Learning Processes. *Journal of Language Studies*, 6, 98-104.
- Bal, N. (2022). Cultural Intelligence of English Language Learners and Their Perceived Strengths and Weaknesses in Intercultural Communication. *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language*, 34, 73-88.
- Bin Towairesh, A. A. (2021). EFL Students' Awareness of Culture-Specific Words and Concepts: The Challenges and Opportunities for Students in a Saudi Undergraduate English Program. *The Education and Science Journal*, 4, 53-61. <https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/sq2c9>
- Bond, M. (2021). Schools and Emergency Remote Education during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Living Rapid Systematic Review. *Asian Journal of Distance Education*, 15, 191-247.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2023). Is Thematic Analysis Used Well in Health Psychology? A Critical Review of Published Research, with Recommendations for Quality Practice and Reporting. *Health Psychology Review*, 17, 695-718. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17437199.2022.2161594>
- Burns, S., & Danaher, P. (2020). Mobilizing Critical Interculturality in Researching within the Educational Margins: Lessons from Dhofari Women's Experiences of English Language Undergraduate Courses in Oman. In D. L. Mulligan, & P. A. Danaher (Eds.), *Researching within the Educational Margins* (pp. 195-211). Palgrave Pivot. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-48845-1_12
- Chen, Z., & Zhang, P. (2022). Trait Emotional Intelligence and Second Language Performance: A Case Study of Chinese EFL Learners. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 43, 731-745. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2020.1767633>
- Dahmash, M. (2023). An Investigation of Language Learning Strategies Used by Female Saudi EFL College Students. *Arab World English Journal*, 290, 1-51. <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/th.290>
- El-Maamiry, A. (2020). Cultural Factors Affecting Information-Seeking Behavior. *Arab World English Journal*, 2, 313-331. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-9825-1.ch021>
- Elmahidi, O., Abd Algane, M., & Bajri, I. A. A. (2023). Sociolinguistic Pedagogical Implications of EFL Issues: A Case Study of Saudi Universities. *International Journal of Learning Teaching and Educational Research*, 22, 264-285. <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.22.4.16>
- Gabriel, R. (2023). Correlations between Learning Style Preferences and Arab-Speaking Gulf Region First-Year College Students' EFL Performance: A Literature Review. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 14, 709-714. <https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1403.18>
- Galloway, N., & Rose, H. (2018). Incorporating Global Englishes into the ELT Classroom. *ELT Journal*, 72, 3-14. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccx010>

- Gedik, N. (2022). Cultural Intelligence of English Language Learners and Their Perceived Strengths and Weaknesses in Intercultural Communication. *The Electronic Journal for English as a Second Language*, 26, 34-47. <https://doi.org/10.55593/ej.26102a3>
- Haby, M. M., Chapman, E., Clark, R., Barreto, J., Reveiz, L., & Lavis, J. N. (2020). What Are the Best Methodologies for Rapid Reviews of the Research Evidence for Evidence-Informed Decision-Making in Health Policy and Practice: A Rapid Review. *Health Research Policy and Systems*, 14, Article No. 83. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12961-016-0155-7>
- Hamarai, F. (2021). English Language Cultural Schema and Its Relationship to Saudi Secondary School Students' Local Cultural Schema and Their Attitudes towards Reading and Comprehension in English: A Case Study of Al-Ahsa Educational Zone, Saudi Arabia. *Open Journal of Modern Linguistics*, 3, 162-178.
- Haque, M., & Sharmin, S. (2022). Perception of Saudi Students about Non-Native English Teachers and Native English Teachers in Teaching English at Jazan University. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 13, 503-514. <https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1303.06>
- Hejash, M. (2021). Culture and Foreign Language Teaching: The Missing Formula of Yemeni English Teachers/Learners. *Journal of English Teaching and Applied Linguistics*, 8, 82-87.
- Hong, J. Y., Ko, H., Mesicek, L., & Song, M. (2021). Cultural Intelligence as Education Contents: Exploring the Pedagogical Aspects of Effective Functioning in Higher Education. *Concurrency and Computation: Practice & Experience*, 33, e5489. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cpe.5489>
- Ibrahim, L. (2022). Content Analysis of Social Studies Book at the Secondary School in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Curricula System-Joint Program) in the Light of the Cultural Intelligence Dimensions. *Journal of the College of Education for Women*, 3, 82-87.
- Ismailov, M. (2021). Virtual Exchanges in an Inquiry-Based Learning Environment: Effects on Intra-Cultural Awareness and Intercultural Communicative Competence. *Cogent Education*, 8, Article ID: 1982601. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2021.1982601>
- Karadağ, T. N. (2022). The Effect of Cultural Intelligence on EFL Learners' Proficiency. *Eurasian Journal of English Language and Literature*, 4, 95-106.
- Karami, V., & Izadpanah, S. (2022). Cultural Intelligence in EFL and ESP Learners: Metacognitive, Cognitive, Motivational, and Behavioral Knowledge. *Education Research International*, 7, 373-382. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2022/4730338>
- Karbakhsh, R., & Ahmadi Safa, M. (2020). Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction, Goal Orientation, Willingness to Communicate, Self-Efficacy, and Learning Strategy Use as Predictors of Second Language Achievement: A Structural Equation Modeling Approach. *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*, 49, 803-822. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10936-020-09714-7>
- Kondina, A. S. (2021). The Experientiality of Narrative in the Process of Teaching a Foreign Language to Students of Non-Linguistic Faculties. *Yaroslavl Pedagogical Bulletin*, 1, 90-96. <https://doi.org/10.20323/1813-145X-2021-1-118-90-96>
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2022). *Culturally Relevant Pedagogy: Asking a Different Question*. Teachers' College Press.
- Li, G. (2020). Principles for Developing Learner Agency in Language Learning in a New Eduscape with COVID-19. *Language Learning*, 5, 30-40.
- Liu, F., & Rao, Z. (2023). The Effects of Cultural and Educational Background on Students' Use of Language Learning Strategies in CFL Learning. *Applied Linguistics Re-*

- view, 7, 26-31. <https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2022-0033>
- Ma, R., & Abdul, N. (2022). Chinese Undergraduate Students' Language Learning Strategy Use in Flipped English Learning and Its Relationships to Gender and Proficiency. *Arab World English Journal*, 13, 170-184. <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol13no3.11>
- Maluch, J. (2021). Differing Effects of the Early Sociocultural Context on Reading for Arabic- and English-Speaking Students. *Language and Education*, 36, 576-594. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2021.2002356>
- McEown, K., McEown, M. S., & Oga-Baldwin, W. L. Q. (2023). The Role of Trait Emotional Intelligence in Predicting Academic Stress, Burnout, and Engagement in Japanese Second Language Learners. *Current Psychology*, 43, 1395-1405.
- Mcgregor, S. (2019). The Role of Environment in Second Language Pragmatic Comprehension: A Case Study of Intensive English Program Students in Homestays. *Journal of Education*, 7, 38-44.
- Meniado, J. (2020). Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Emotional Intelligence of EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia: Implications to Teaching Performance and Institutional Effectiveness. *Arab World English Journal*, 11, 3-14. <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol11no4.1>
- Mirghani, T. M. (2020). The Growing Demand for Education in Saudi Arabia: How Effective Is Borrowing Educational Models from the West? *Journal of Education and Learning*, 9, 59-67. <https://doi.org/10.5539/jel.v9n6p59>
- Mohammed, I., & Al-Bakri, S. (2022). Iraqi EFL University Students' Cultural Intelligence and Language Proficiency: A Correlational Study. *Journal of Language Studies*, 3, 23-27. <https://doi.org/10.25130/jls.5.3.18>
- Munandar, M. I., & Newton, J. (2021). Indonesian EFL Teachers' Pedagogic Beliefs and Classroom Practices Regarding Culture and Interculturality. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 21, 158-173. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2020.1867155>
- Omar, A., Altohami, W., & Afzaal, M. (2022). Assessment of the Governance Quality of the Departments of English in Saudi Universities: Implications for Sustainable Development. *World Journal of English Language*, 12, 443-449. <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v12n8p443>
- Pazinas, M. (2021). Cultural Determinants Affecting Pedagogical Decisions in Content Design: A Case Study. *Journal of English Teaching*, 17, 41-53. <https://doi.org/10.1108/LTHE-10-2020-0053>
- Presbitero, A. (2020). Foreign Language Skill, Anxiety, Cultural Intelligence and Individual Task Performance in Global Virtual Teams: A Cognitive Perspective. *Journal of International Management*, 26, Article ID: 100729. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intman.2019.100729>
- Preti, E., Di Mattei, V., Peregò, G., Ferrari, F., Mazzetti, M., Taranto, P., Di Pierro, R., Madeddu, F., & Calati, R. (2020). The Psychological Impact of Epidemic and Pandemic Outbreaks on Healthcare Workers: Rapid Review of the Evidence. *Current Psychiatry Reports*, 22, Article No. 43. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11920-020-01166-z>
- Qadhi, S., & Abu-Shawish, R. (2020). The Relation between English Language Cultural Exposure and EL Teachers' Competencies. *Journal of English Teaching*, 2, 83-89. <https://doi.org/10.22158/assc.v2n4p83>
- Rachmawaty, N., Wello, M. B., Akil, M., & Dollah, S. (2018). Do Cultural Intelligence and Language Learning Strategies Influence Students' English Language Proficiency? *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 9, 655-663. <https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.0903.27>

- Radwan, A. (2022). Foreign Language Learners' Beliefs and Use of Language Learning Strategies. *Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, 13, 3-14. <https://doi.org/10.53542/jass.v13i3.5415>
- Rajaram, K. (2023). Cultural Intelligence in Teaching and Learning. In K. Rajaram (Ed.), *Learning Intelligence: Innovative and Digital Transformative Learning Strategies* (pp. 57-118). Springer Nature Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-9201-8_2
- Razavi, M., & Gilakjani, A. (2020). The Effect of Teaching Cultural Content on Intermediate EFL Learners' Reading Comprehension Ability. *TEFLIN Journal*, 31, 302-321. <https://doi.org/10.15639/teflinjournal.v31i2/302-321>
- Sakib, S. M. N. (2022). Importance of EFL Teacher's Emotional Intelligence when Working with Students in Saudi University. *Linguistics Journal*, 3, 893-899. <https://doi.org/10.35542/osf.io/jxe89>
- Salam, U., Sukarti, & Arifin, Z. (2020). An Analysis of Learning Styles and Learning Strategies Used by a Successful Language Learner. *JET (Journal of English Teaching)*, 6, 111-121. <https://doi.org/10.33541/jet.v6i2.1734>
- Sarimsakova, D. (2021). Developing the Sociolinguistic Competence of Future English Teachers through the Use of Case Studies. *Mental Enlightenment Scientific-Methodological Journal*, 2, 54-65. <https://doi.org/10.51348/tziuj202127>
- Saud, W. (2019). Emotional Intelligence and Its Relationship to Academic Performance among Saudi EFL Undergraduates. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 8, 222-230. <https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v8n6p222>
- Şenel, M. (2020). Investigation of the Cultural Intelligence Levels of Turkish University Students at Foreign Language Departments. *International Journal of Language Education*, 3, 4-11.
- Shanti, Y. (2020). Learning Styles of Indonesian EFL Students: Culture and Learning. *Arab World English Journal*, 11, 91-102. <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol11no1.8>
- Stephens, R., Dong, L., & Soares, A. M. (2020). Leveraging Language Proficiency through Cultural Intelligence to Improve Global Virtual Team Performance. *Journal of Business Disciplines*, 3, 78-83. <https://doi.org/10.35255/jbd1871.101001>
- Taber, K. S. (2020). Mediated Learning Leading Development—The Social Development Theory of Lev Vygotsky. In B. Akpan, & T. J. Kennedy (Eds.), *Science Education in Theory and Practice* (pp. 277-291). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-43620-9_19
- Taheri, H., Sadighi, F., Bagheri, M. S., & Bavali, M. (2019). EFL Learners' L2 Achievement and Its Relationship with Cognitive Intelligence, Emotional Intelligence, Learning Styles, and Language Learning Strategies. *Cogent Education*, 6, Article ID: 1655882. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2019.1655882>
- Tai, K. W. H., & Zhao, Y. V. (2022). Success Factors for English as a Second Language University Students' Attainment in Academic English Language Proficiency: Exploring the Roles of Secondary School Medium-of-Instruction, Motivation, and Language Learning Strategies. *Applied Linguistics Review*, 15, 611-641. <https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2022-0049>
- Thao, L. T., Thuy, P. T., Thi, N. A., Yen, P. H., Thu, H. T. A., & Tra, N. H. (2023). Impacts of Emotional Intelligence on Second Language Acquisition: English-Major Students' Perspectives. *SAGE Open*, 13, 453-462. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440231212065>
- Tiwari, H. P. (2023). Teachers' Experience about the Roles of Classroom Questioning Technique in English Language Teaching: A Narrative Inquiry. *Academia Research Journal*, 2, 133-143. <https://doi.org/10.3126/academia.v2i1.52350>

- Towairesh, A. (2021). EFL Students' Awareness of Culture-Specific Words and Concepts: The Challenges and Opportunities for Students in a Saudi Undergraduate English Program. *Arab World English Journal*, 12, 3-15. <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol12no3.1>
- Ward, R. J., Bristow, S. J., Kovshoff, H., Cortese, S., & Kreppner, J. (2022). The Effects of ADHD Teacher Training Programs on Teachers and Pupils: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *Journal of Attention Disorders*, 26, 225-244. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1087054720972801>
- Waterkeyn, T. (2021). Sociocultural Impacts of English and Globalization on Women in Higher Education in Saudi Arabia. *Journal of English*, 4, 78-81.
- Wujiabudula, A., & Karatepe, Ç. (2020). A Study of Pre-Service ELT Teachers' Cultural Intelligence and Its Relationship with Metacognitive, Cognitive, Motivational, and Behavioral Cultural Intelligence. *European Journal of Applied Linguistics Studies*, 3, 79-89. <https://doi.org/10.46827/ejals.v3i1.203>
- Yu, R. (2020). Culture in Second or Foreign Language Acquisition. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 11, 943-947. <https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1106.10>
- Zou, B., & Lertlit, S. (2022). Oxford's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning: English learning of Chinese students in Thai university. *LEARN Journal: Language Education and Acquisition Research Network*, 15, 705-723.

Appendix

Table A1. JBI-QARI Scores for 43 studies included in the study.

Studies	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Total
Abu, 2023	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Aldosari & Alrefai, 2020	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	8
Alotaibi & Alharbi, 2022	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Al-Hazmi, 2023	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Alshenqeeti, 2020	1	1	1	1	1	0.5	1	1	1	8.5
Ang et al., 2020	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Astifo, 2023	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Bal, 2022	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Burns & Danaher, 2020	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
El-Maamiry, 2020	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Hamarai, 2021	1	1	1	1	0.5	1	1	1	1	8.5
Haque & Sharmin, 2022	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Ibrahim, 2022	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Karami & Izadpanah, 2022	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Gabriel, 2023	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Maluch, 2021	1	1	1	1	1	0.5	1	1	1	5.5
Mohammed & Al-Bakri, 2022	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Pazinas, 2021	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Qadhi & Abu-Shawish, 2020	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Şenel, 2020	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Towairesh, 2021	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Waterkeyn, 2021	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Abdulaziz & Almeshari, 2019	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Abumelha, 2023	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Ahmed, 2021	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Ahmed, 2022	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Alawfi, 2022	1	1	1	1	1	0.5	1	1	1	8.5
Alenezi, 2020	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	8
Ali & Saleem, 2022	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Abdulaziz & Almeshari, 2019	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Al Mukhallafi, 2019	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	8
Alqarni, 2023	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Alzubi, 2022	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Bin Towairesh, 2021	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Dahmash, 2023	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9

Continued

Elmahidi et al., 2023	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Al-khresheh, 2020	1	1	1	1	1	0.5	1	1	1	1	8.5
Meniado, 2020	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Mirghani, 2020	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Al Mukhallafi, 2019	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Omar et al., 2022	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Sakib, 2022	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
Saud, 2019	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
