Sociolinguistic Pedagogical Implications of EFL Issues: A Case Study of Saudi Universities

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Abstract. In this study, the sociolinguistic pedagogical implications of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) issues in Saudi universities have been considered. Future EFL instructors require education that acknowledges linguistic, socio-historical, cultural, and pedagogical aspects. Areas of improvement in explaining instructors' vital role in changing language education are highly concentrated in language proficiency and technology. Investigating in the significant influence of sociolinguistic characteristics on the educational context and the growth and use of EFL results in raising social and cultural awareness, enabling students to know how to interpret the surrounding environment. In this study report, we describe the close relationship between social and educational settings, and the classroom environment as suitable factors for fostering sociolinguistic competence in EFL learners. The desired outcomes were to explore whether culture and education could be viewed as two inseparable independent parameters and whether EFL learners needed to master the cultural rules of use and rules of discourse. EFL instructors believe that teaching a language in its natural context is the best way to teach the language. The authors used a questionnaire to collect data from Saudi university staff members. A significant conclusion was reached about the sociolinguistic pedagogical implications of EFL issues. Responses to the questionnaire were analysed by SPSS. The use of a socio-pedagogical approach to teaching EFL can have a positive impact on EFL issues. It is recommended that EFL instructors in Saudi universities take a socio-pedagogical approach to

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teach the language and that universities provide teachers and students with adequate resources to help them understand the language.

1. Introduction

This study dealt with the topic of sociolinguistic pedagogical implications of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) issues by applying a case study conducted at Saudi universities. Exploring various factors and the effect of the social context on EFL learners' English aptitude at the tertiary level reflect that social competence helps learners gain more than academic competence. Non-native speakers frequently encounter misunderstandings in the cross-cultural implementation of communicative acts, which are typically caused by their improper use of pragma-linguistic and socio-pragmatic skills. Not making an effort to recognize and understand the aspects of the language-use situations that influence the rules of language usage cross-cultural differences may lead to misconceptions and major communication breakdowns between the speech participants. The rules of speaking can be learned gradually by the language learners as they become more and more ingrained in the culture of the target language; however, this process takes time, and many rules may go years without being noticed or, worse yet, never be learned at all. Communication is a significant area of challenge for EFL learners.

English is a global language with the right to global ownership since it is widely learned and used by people of all ethnicities with different mother tongues and cultures. As a communication solution for multilingual and multicultural situations, it is unsurprising that distinct variants originate and exist across geographic regions according to Jenkins (2015) and Galloway and Rose (2018). Akkakoson (2019), and Ambele (2021) stated that the existence of this trend should be acknowledged and understood by educators working in the English language teaching (ELT) sector. Their objectives need to be reprioritized, and their ELT frameworks need to be rethought. The major educational emphasis should no longer be on adhering to Standard English, such as British English or American English. Priority should be given to strategies that address communication success in cross-cultural contexts and the new linguistic landscape (Jenkins 2015; Galloway and Rose, 2015). English's sociolinguistic landscape has changed and become more diverse, causing the language to be less tied to particular English varieties or ethnic groupings like British and American, according to Jenkins (2015) and Galloway and Rose (2018). As a result, the uses and applications of the language quickly transcend racial, social, and geographic borders.

The main challenge of this study was to find the sociolinguistic pedagogical consequences of EFL difficulties. The eventual goal of language education is to develop social-linguistic competence, therefore teachers' crucial involvement in this change is still a huge concern. Education that considers linguistic, socio-historical, cultural, and pedagogical issues is necessary for future EFL instructors. At the same time, this was considered taking cognisance of the impact of variables and the social setting on tertiary-level English proficiency in EFL learners that was

thoroughly explored in this study, together with examining how sociolinguistic traits substantially impact the educational environment, and the development and use of English as a foreign language. This study was concerned with examining the connection between social and educational contexts, as well as the characteristics that make a classroom environment conducive to building sociolinguistic competency in EFL learners and the intended outcomes. English as a foreign language (EFL) is the language used by students from non-English speaking countries. It is used for education, business, communication, and travel. It is also the language used in most international academic studies. The purpose of this article is to look at the sociolinguistic pedagogical implications of the EFL issues in Saudi Arabia and how they affect EFL learning in universities. English is used as a lingua franca in many countries and is the language of instruction in many universities. The demand for English in Saudi Arabia has increased due to the country's economic growth and its need for international trade. This article will explore the sociolinguistic implications of the EFL issues that affect EFL learning in universities. The problem stated for the study was to determine the sociolinguistic pedagogical implications of the EFL issues. Because attaining social-linguistic competence is the end goal, instructors' vital role in changing language education is still a major concern. Future EFL instructors require education that reflects linguistic, socio-historical, cultural, and pedagogical aspects. This study aimed to explore the effect of specific factors and social contexts on EFL learners' English aptitude at the tertiary level and to investigate the significant influence of sociolinguistic characteristics on the educational context and the growth and use of English as a foreign language. This investigation was the leading step toward exploring the close relationship between social and educational settings and the classroom environment as factors that foster sociolinguistic competence in EFL learners and the desired outcomes.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

English is used as a lingua franca in many countries and is the language of instruction in many universities. The demand for English in Saudi Arabia has increased due to the country's economic growth and its need for international trade. This article explores the sociolinguistic implications of the issues that affect EFL learning in universities. The problem stated for the study entails determining the sociolinguistic pedagogical implications of EFL issues. Because attaining social-linguistic competence is the end goal, instructors' vital role in changing language education is still a major concern. Future EFL instructors require education that considers linguistic, socio-historical, cultural, and pedagogical aspects. This study was aimed at exploring the effect of factors such as social context on EFL learners' English aptitude at the tertiary level, and investigating the significant influence of sociolinguistic characteristics on the educational context and the growth and use of English as a foreign language.

1.2. Research Objectives

This study was aimed at raising the awareness of language teachers for the sociolinguistic pedagogical implications of EFL which can be applied in a language learning classroom. This article offers recommendations on how to develop a pedagogy that teachers can use to teach and learn EFL in addition to studying the typical close interaction between social and educational contexts

from parts of sociolinguistics and cultural research. Accordingly, this study aimed at attaining the following objectives:

1. Determining the sociolinguistic pedagogical implications of EFL.
2. Explaining instructors' vital role in changing language education.
3. Proving that future EFL instructors require education that considers linguistic, socio-historical, cultural, and pedagogical aspects.
4. Investigating the significant influence of sociolinguistic characteristics on the educational context and the growth and use of EFL.
5. Describing the close relationship between social and educational settings and the classroom environment as suitable factors for fostering sociolinguistic competence in EFL learners and attaining the desired outcomes.

1.3. Research questions
In this study, researchers addressed the following questions:

1. What are the sociolinguistic pedagogical implications of the EFL issues?
2. What are the instructors' vital roles in changing language education?
3. What do future EFL instructors require from education that considers linguistic, socio-historical, cultural, and pedagogical aspects?
4. How do sociolinguistic characteristics influence the educational context and the growth and use of English as a foreign language?
5. How close is the relationship between social and educational settings and the classroom environment as suitable factors for fostering sociolinguistic competence in EFL learners and the desired outcomes?

2. Literature Review
2.1. Sociolinguistic Pedagogical Implications of EFL Issues
The study of language in its social context is known as sociolinguistics. It looks at the way language is used in different social settings and the different ways in which language can be used to communicate. The term 'socio-pedagogy' refers to the use of sociolinguistic approaches to teaching and learning. Socio-pedagogical teaching focuses on teaching language in its natural context so that students are able to understand and use the language correctly. Sociolinguistic pedagogy has implications for the teaching and learning of EFL in Saudi universities. Various sociolinguistic issues need to be addressed to ensure effective teaching and learning of a language. These include the use of the native language, the use of dialects, the use of non-standard language, the use of slang, and the use of code-switching.

2.2. Overview of the EFL Issues in Saudi Arabia
According to the researchers in this study, the use of the native language is an important issue in Saudi universities. Many students do not have a strong command of English, so they rely heavily on their native language to communicate and understand information. This can lead to confusion and misunderstanding in the classroom. The use of dialects is another issue that needs to be addressed. Saudi universities have students from different regions of the country, and each region has its dialect. This can lead to misunderstandings and difficulty in communication. The use of non-standard language is also an issue. Many students use non-standard languages, such as slang or colloquialisms, to communicate and to show their familiarity with the language. This can lead to

confusion and difficulty in comprehension. Finally, code-switching is an issue that needs to be addressed. Code-switching is the use of two languages in one conversation. This can lead to confusion and difficulty in understanding the conversation.

2.3. The Impact of Sociolinguistic Pedagogical Implications on EFL Issues in Saudi Universities

 Ofodu (2012) found that factors such as gender, age, and religion have a minor effect on the English aptitude of secondary school students while studying the usage of English as a Second Language in the classroom. Therefore, parents should be more concerned about their children speaking their native language and should offer maximum support in this area. According to Faizin (2015), the conditions presented here are not limited to the specific context of Portuguese language instruction. Methods for collecting sociolinguistic information were addressed during the first part of the study. After that, phonology and grammar are scrutinised to see whether there is a discrepancy between real-world language use and typical teaching materials and how that might be fixed. The intention of this section on interactional norms is to shed light on a topic that is often overlooked in more conventional training materials. To tackle these foundational concerns, Vlack (2011) looks at language from three separate but interconnected theoretical perspectives. His studies include sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, and cross-linguistic pragmatics (to a lesser extent). By taking this route, he hopes to provide students with a broad introduction to and a solid grounding on how language is researched, evaluated, and taught, with an eye on their future language acquisition. He integrates fundamental SLA theory with real-world linguistic data. The students have been pushed to prepare lesson plans that might be used in a formal education setting.

2.4. Sociolinguistic Factors Influencing Both the Acquisition and Instruction of English

Sociolinguistic factors play an important role in acquiring and instructing a foreign language and need to be considered.

2.4.1. The Social Climate

The phrase 'social context' encompasses a wide variety of language-learning environments, such as home, neighbourhood, school, and community. Experts like Pavlenko (2002), Hall and Walsh (2002), and Lesaux and Siegel (2003) have recently shown that historical, political, and social factors, as well as psycholinguistic aptitude, all play a role in the process of switching from one's home language to a second or foreign language. This result is in line with studies from the 1980s that demonstrate the importance of the social context for any attempt to understand second/foreign language acquisition (Beebe & Takahashi, 1989; Sridhar and Sridhar, 1986; Heath, 1983). A learner's motivation, goal, the functions a second/foreign language is expected to perform in the community, the availability of input to the learner, the variation in input, and the proficiency norms acceptable to that speech community are all influenced by the learner's and teacher's social context. Learning a new language is impacted by the context in which it is first encountered, such as at home and at school. Learners of a second or foreign language and native speakers have more opportunities to interact due

to social considerations, as noted by Muftah (2022). Shenk (2014) has found that the social and discursive context in which instructional intervention is offered significantly affects the success of second/foreign language students in school. The social setting determines not just the status of the target language within a given speech community, but also the kind of linguistic resources available to language students. The sociolinguistic characteristics of English language acquisition and its use in India, West Germany, and Japan, as illustrated by Nunan (2003), show how these countries have significantly different influences on the growth and use of English as a second or foreign language.

2.4.2. The Educational Setting
There is a close relationship between social and educational settings. The study of educational settings in educational psychology sheds light on the interdependence and mutual influence of educational institutions and environments where teaching and learning occur (Bloome & Green, 2015). The educational system has a significant impact on language planning, policy, and, most importantly, the instructional resources made accessible to second-language students. "The experiences that participants bring to the classroom are shaped not only by the learning and teaching segments they have encountered in the classroom, but also by their larger social, economic, educational, and political environment, so it is impossible to separate classroom life from the dynamics of political, educational, and societal institutions", as argued by Kumaravadivelu (2006).

Tollefson and Tsui (2014) claim that the educational context is crucial in determining both the nature and the goals of language learning programmes for English language learning (ELL). For instance, the educational setting affects the connection between the native tongue and the language of instruction, as well as the development of 'standard' and 'nonstandard' linguistic norms. Official decisions in the field of education will allow students learning a second language to choose between additive and subtractive forms of bilingualism. Additive bilingualism allows second-language learners to develop functional proficiency in a second language without abandoning their first language. Subtractive bilingualism describes the phenomenon in which second language learners lose their native language as their ability and confidence in the target language improves. Norton and Toohey (2011) state that "[e]ducation can affect how non-native speaker status, race, gender, class, age, and social standing mediate access to linguistic and interactional resources, and how discourses appropriated by second language learners are linked to power and authority" (cited in Pavlenko, 2002:291).

In addition, there are two perspectives when investigating the function of language in society. The first is the study of the societal effects on language or linguistic sociology. Sociology is the study of how language affects social interactions. Field surveys and studies have shown that they are inseparable despite widespread assumptions to the contrary. Because of how closely language and culture are linked, it is fairly complicated to examine each independently. Sociolinguistics and the sociology of language are synonymous fields, with sociolinguistics existing just as a convenient 'one word' in comparison to the many

other names under which the study of language has been known before World War II. Learners' unique traits have a major bearing on how quickly and well they acquire a language, thus teachers should not ignore them.

2.4.3. One's Age

It is generally agreed that one's future linguistic ability is impacted by the age at which one first begins learning a foreign language. Lenneberg and Lenneberg (1967) argue that learning a second language before reaching puberty is optimal since after this age, linguistic growth slows down. Younger is better, according to Krashen (1981), but he also proposed that children and adults may use different processes when learning a second language, with children relying on the same innate properties of language acquisition as with first language acquisition and adults relying on general problem-solving skills. For others, however, 'older is better' because of the benefits for second-language acquisition of increased cognitive and reading abilities that come with age (McLaughlin, 1987; Snow, 1983). These data demonstrate that maturation influences L2 (second language) learning.

2.4.4. Acquiring Sociolinguistic Competence through Instruction

Two primary approaches exist for imparting and showcasing sociolinguistic skills. Two examples are incorporating speech acts as situations in which students must use language with consideration of socio-pragmatic factors like the hearer's social status, the degree of imposition, or the content of the request, and using cultural models in which students are taught cultural elements embedded in language use, either explicitly or implicitly. There are several factors that could make a classroom environment unsuitable for fostering sociolinguistic competence in students, one of which is a lack of authenticity in instructional materials. The majority of NNS who teach English confront difficulties in establishing sociolinguistic expertise, as stated by Izumi (1996). These difficulties include the NNS's personal lack of comprehension, current curriculum requirements, varying teaching goals, and evaluation and motivating systems. Developing a socially acceptable lexicon is less of a priority for the majority of EFL students than mastering the grammatical rules and sentence construction of the target language. As stated by McGregor (2019), there is always room for improvement in the socio-pragmatic use of language among EFL students. She argues that the ability to utilize a foreign language effectively as measured by sociolinguistic competence is not implied by proficiency. Izumi (1996) argues that, despite the challenges of teaching and learning sociolinguistic competence, students can be helped to promote and achieve sociolinguistic competence by increasing their understanding of sociolinguistic language usage standards, as articulated by Ellis (1991).

There are three main reasons why sociolinguistic competence is not generally recognized as a separate issue and an integral part of language instruction, as outlined by Omaggio (2001):
   a) Due to time limits imposed by the curriculum, many language teachers feel they cannot adequately provide students with sociocultural training.

b) Sometimes educators do not feel confident in their own abilities to adequately address students' cultural backgrounds while they (the students) learn a second language.

c) When attempting to help students grasp the rationale and relevance of the target culture, teachers sometimes find it incredibly challenging to address student opinions.

Yu (2006) agrees that there are not enough communicative contexts in which students use language, and she argues that it is unrealistic to expect students to use authentic and natural language in the classroom, where most second-language learning takes place. Yu draws attention to the challenges associated with teaching and learning sociolinguistic competence. Due to a lack of L2 sociolinguistic competence, transmission from L1 includes the transfer of L1 sociocultural patterns into L2 sociolinguistic rules of language usage. According to Holmes and Brown (1987), it seems simpler to explicitly teach grammatical rules, segmental level pronunciation, and lexical items, while the sociocultural components of communicative competence are viewed as incidentally learned. This is a false premise since familiarity with linguistic conventions and the correct method to pronounce and interpret individual words do not necessarily translate into familiarity with the contexts in which those words are used.

Social context and cultural milieu shape how linguistic forms are understood by speakers of a given language. In actual communication, forms have roles and socio-pragmatic meanings that are intertwined with one another. Classroom interaction with native speakers is essential for teachers to help their pupils develop their communicative skills. Teachers need to be well-versed in the topic of sociolinguistic competence if they are to aid their pupils in developing this skill. Most teachers either do not cover the material which they do not know much about or do a poor job of covering it since they have inadequate training in sociolinguistics during their own education. An effective response is needed to the problem of teachers lacking sociolinguistic abilities. To accomplish this, it is necessary to either provide instructors with a well-structured educational programme designed specifically for them, or to provide them with ample opportunities to interact with native English speakers so that they may acquire a more nuanced understanding of English culture and proper language usage. Altering curricula and syllabi to make room for instruction in this area can also help in resolving the aforementioned problems. Learners' purported inability to overcome pre-existing linguistic and cultural hurdles will also be addressed in the final results of the analysis of the qualitative data.

2.4.5. Education in English Language and Familiarity with Sociolinguistics
Sociolinguistic competence is often cited as a desirable outcome for students of English as a second or foreign language, although it has never been properly defined within the ELT paradigm. Indonesia's English as a foreign language curriculum has systematically incorporated sociolinguistic competence. Sociolinguistic competence is reflected in the teaching goals for English as foreign language classes increasingly including authentic communication practices, with an emphasis on communicative-oriented tasks and environment-relevant

language abilities. As a result, it is crucial to discuss how best to measure students' progress toward sociolinguistic competence in the classroom.

Even though there is a wealth of information available in the academic literature on sociolinguistic competence, language instructors must be able to effectively incorporate basic ideas into their own classroom practices. Educators need to be aware of the shift in the definition of sociolinguistic competence from a set of linguistic skills to one that is fluid and adapts to the speakers' environment through their use of a variety of linguistic resources and communicative opportunities afforded by geographical and social mobility (Blommaert, 2014). Therefore, it is essential that teachers of English as a foreign language learn how to incorporate different semiotics and literacy practices into their lessons. It shifts our focus from the conventional definition of sociolinguistic competence, which places greater value on suitability and cultural fit (Canale and Swain, 1980). In light of the shift in EFL instruction's focus from correctness to learner autonomy, teachers should promote additional activities that aim to boost student involvement and provide more opportunities for students to build language skills (Li, 2020).

However, improvements in teaching methods are needed to create an atmosphere conducive to learning a new language, particularly in combining academic and recreational work. EFL teachers need to constantly reframe the ideas behind communicative language teaching regarding how language is being used today. It has been suggested that EFL teachers do this by scrutinizing the students' regular patterns of speech and engagement. Moreover, modern English speakers may be hampered in their expressiveness by concerns over social decency (Xamidullaevna, 2020). To build a useful and engaging EFL classroom milieu, it is necessary to re-evaluate current pedagogical approaches to language, including those that emphasize linguistic diversity, satisfying local needs, and the importance of learners' experiences (Pennycook, 2014; Richards, 2006; Savignon, 2006).

The crucial role of teachers in modifying language education is still a primary concern because acquiring social-linguistic competence is the end aim. Future English teachers need training that considers cultural, linguistic, socio-historical, and pedagogical factors (Sarimsakova, 2021). Consequently, it is crucial that teachers of English as a foreign language grasp the concept before it can be used in a formal EFL environment. If teachers and students have the same assumptions about what it takes to develop sociolinguistic competence in the classroom, it would be much simpler to run a smoother, more productive learning environment. According to Munandar and Newton (2021), EFL educators are staunch in their adherence to pedagogical beliefs regarding the importance of culture and intercultural competence in the classroom. Teachers' convictions will serve as a springboard for their intellectualization of commitments, which in turn must rest on a firm grasp of the underpinnings of the discipline (Richard, Gallo & Renandya, 2002).

Accordingly, classes should not do away with discussing students' sociolinguistic competence. It establishes a theoretical and practical framework for analysing,

incorporating, and assessing students' sociolinguistic skills in the classroom setting. Teachers who are conversant with such concepts will also have a leg upon which to stand when it comes to students' grasp of foundational knowledge (Putra, 2019). To what extent do ideas and deeds, which are inextricably linked, influence the potential and originality of those who practise communicative language teaching? As part of developing students' sociolinguistic competence, instructors of English as a foreign language emphasize linguistic and cultural differences between their students' home languages and the target language, have them translate polite expressions into the target language, and to practise having a natural conversation through role play.

Littlewood (2013) advocates creating communication-focused, context-sensitive language instruction as one solution to the problems highlighted. By providing engaging educational opportunities, communicative language teaching helps students improve their communication abilities. Therefore, activities and exercises must be planned according to the curriculum and regarded as an integral part of the educational process (Littlewood, 2013). Teachers of English as a foreign language in Indonesia are obligated to incorporate sociolinguistic skills into their lessons using several methods, including different strategies, activities, assignments, and evaluations. The implementation of the K–13 curriculum (2013) in Indonesia's formal EFL classroom has greatly improved students' chances of achieving sociolinguistic competence. Previous studies have shown that EFL educators are interested in students' language and cultural backgrounds. For instance, Zaenul (2016) recommends four strategies for students dealing with adults to whom they look up. The problem will not go away as long as teachers show little enthusiasm for, or outright reject, the concept of change in the classroom. A sustainable shift in EFL pedagogy can only occur if the focus on sociolinguistic competence is maintained throughout the teaching and learning processes. For output priority in language learning, it is essential to devote more attention to the junction of sociolinguistic competency and English education (Zhang and Wang, 2016).

2. Methods and Study Population

In this study, SPSS was used to evaluate data collected from a questionnaire issued to a random sample of 49 tertiary-level instructors who teach English as a foreign language at different Saudi universities. The instrument for collecting data was a seven-item questionnaire administered via Google Forms. All responders teach English in a formal context as their area of expertise and as a foreign language. Validity and reliability have been examined. The questionnaire was submitted to five experts to validate its content and was amended based on the responses of the referees. The purpose of the instrument was to assess the attitudes of respondents regarding the sociolinguistic pedagogical implications of EFL issues. Each item of the questionnaire required a response based on a five-point Likert scale used to gauge attitudes. The instrument for collecting data was a seven-item questionnaire administered via Google Forms. All responders taught English as a foreign language in a formal context as their area of expertise. Validity and reliability have been examined. The questionnaire was submitted to five experts to validate its content, and amended based on the responses of the referees. The purpose of the instrument was to assess the attitudes of respondents

regarding the sociolinguistic pedagogical implications of EFL issues. Each item of the questionnaire required a response based on the five-point Likert scale used to gauge attitudes.

4.   Results and Discussion

Based on the study objectives and the statement of the problem, the data collected by means of the questionnaire were analysed and the following charts show the results. In general, this research is considered significant because sociolinguistics has close links to anthropology through the study of language and culture, and to sociology through the study of the function that language plays in structuring social groups and organizations. It is also linked to social psychology, particularly with respect to the identification of in-group and out-of-group actions and the expression of views and perceptions. Knowledge of the social environment in which language is used, the roles of those involved, the information exchanged, and the purpose of the contact is important in understanding the sociolinguistic pedagogical implications of the challenges of EFL. Teachers, textbook writers, and educators can benefit from this study. This study has looked at raising language teachers' awareness of the sociolinguistic Pedagogical Implications of EFL which can be applied in a language learning classroom. The findings reflect developing pedagogies that teachers can use to teach and learn EFL and the close interaction between social and educational contexts from parts of sociolinguistics and cultural research. Accordingly, and based on the study objectives, this study has concluded that there are:

4.1. Areas of improvement in explaining instructors' vital role in changing language education

Areas of improvement in explaining instructors' vital role in changing language education are highly concentrated in language proficiency and technology, among others.
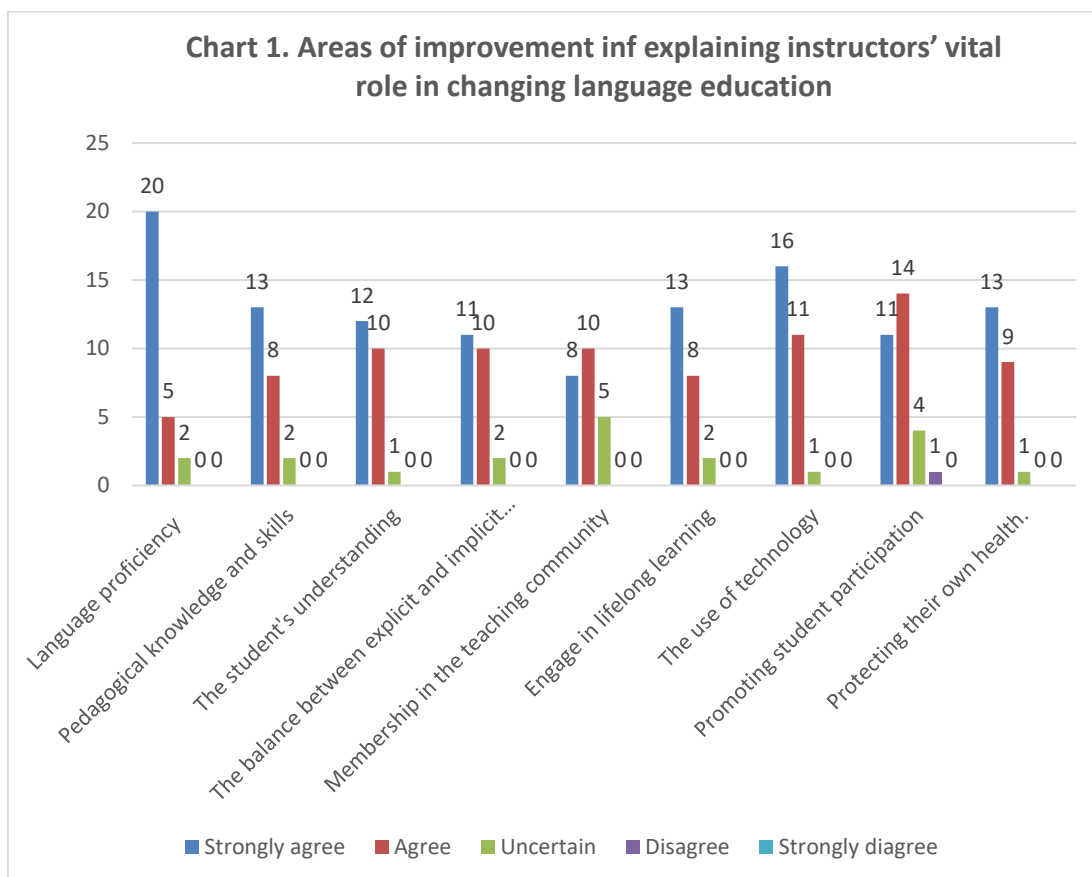
Figure 1: Areas of improvement in explaining instructors' vital role in changing language education

Based on Figure 1, which shows areas of improvement in explaining instructors' vital role in changing language education, the majority of the participants (20%) 'strongly agree' that 'language proficiency' is a vital role, 5% 'agree', while 2% of the participants are 'uncertain'. Regarding 'pedagogical knowledge and skills,' 13% 'strongly agree' that it is important, 8% 'agree', and 2% were 'uncertain'. With respect to 'the student's understanding', 12% 'strongly agree' that it is vital, 10% 'agree', while 2% of the participants are 'uncertain'. A number of the participants (11%) 'strongly agree' that there should be 'a balance between explicit and implicit teaching'; 10% 'agree', while 2% were 'uncertain'. Furthermore, with regard to 'membership in the teaching community', 8% of the participants 'strongly agree', 10% 'agree', while 5% of the participants were 'uncertain'. In the category 'engage in lifelong learning', 13% of the participants 'strongly agree', 8% 'agree', and 2% were 'uncertain'. Regarding 'the use of technology', 16% of the participants indicated 'strongly agree', 11% 'agree', while 1% of the participants indicated 'uncertain'. Regarding 'promoting student participation', 8% of the participants selected 'strongly agree', 10% 'agree', 5% were 'uncertain', and only 1% indicated 'disagree'. Lastly, in the 'protecting their own health' category, as shown in the chart, 13% of the participants selected 'strongly agree', 9% 'agree', and only 1% indicated 'uncertain'.

4.2. Future EFL instructors require education that considers linguistic, socio-historical, cultural, and pedagogical aspects

Future EFL instructors require education that considers linguistic, socio-historical, cultural, and pedagogical aspects, indicating that EFL instructors should be aware of their own background, culture, and identity.

Chart 2. Future EFL instructors require education that considers linguistic, socio-historical, cultural, and pedagogical aspects
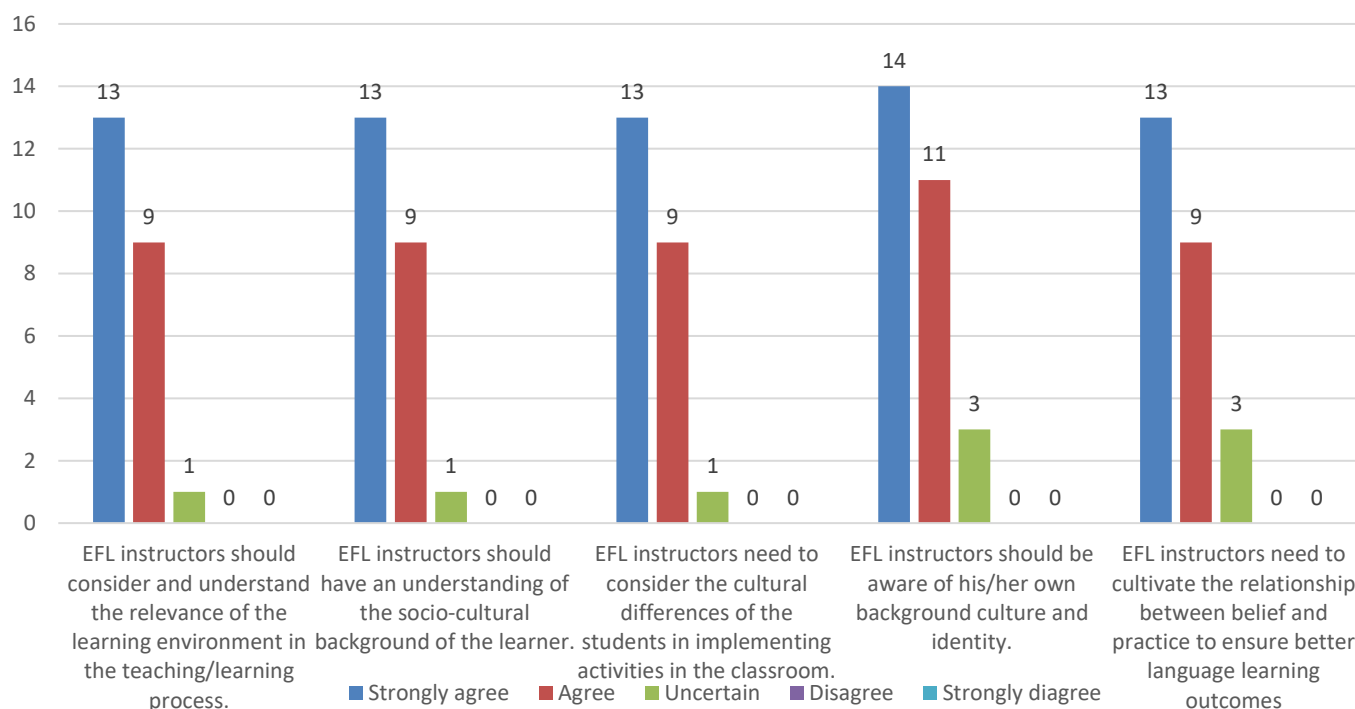
Figure 2: Future EFL instructors require education that considers linguistic, socio-historical, cultural, and pedagogical aspects

According to Figure 2, which shows that future EFL instructors require education that considers linguistic, socio-historical, cultural, and pedagogical aspects, 13% of the participants 'strongly agree' that 'EFL instructors should consider and understand the relevance of the learning environment in the teaching/learning process', 9% 'agree', while only 1% of the respondents were 'uncertain'. Regarding 'EFL instructors having an understanding of the socio-cultural background of the learner', 13% of the participants 'strongly agree', 9% 'agree', and only 1% were 'uncertain'. For the statement 'EFL instructors need to consider the cultural differences of the students in implementing activities in the classroom', 13% of the participants 'strongly agree', 9% 'agree', and only 1% indicated 'uncertain'. Furthermore, 14% of the participants 'strongly agree' that 'EFL instructors should be aware of their own background culture and identity', 11% 'agree', and 3% indicated 'uncertain'. Lastly, 13% of the participants 'strongly agree' that 'EFL instructors need to cultivate the relationship between belief and

practice to ensure better language learning outcomes', while 9% and 3% of them selected 'agree' and 'uncertain', respectively.

4.3. Exploring Factors and the Effect of social context on EFL Learners' English Aptitude at the tertiary level

Exploring the effect of specific factors and social context on EFL learners' English aptitude at the tertiary level shows that social competence helps learners gain more than academic competence, and context can support students to appreciate the relevance of disciplinary knowledge and skills, increasing their motivation and engagement.
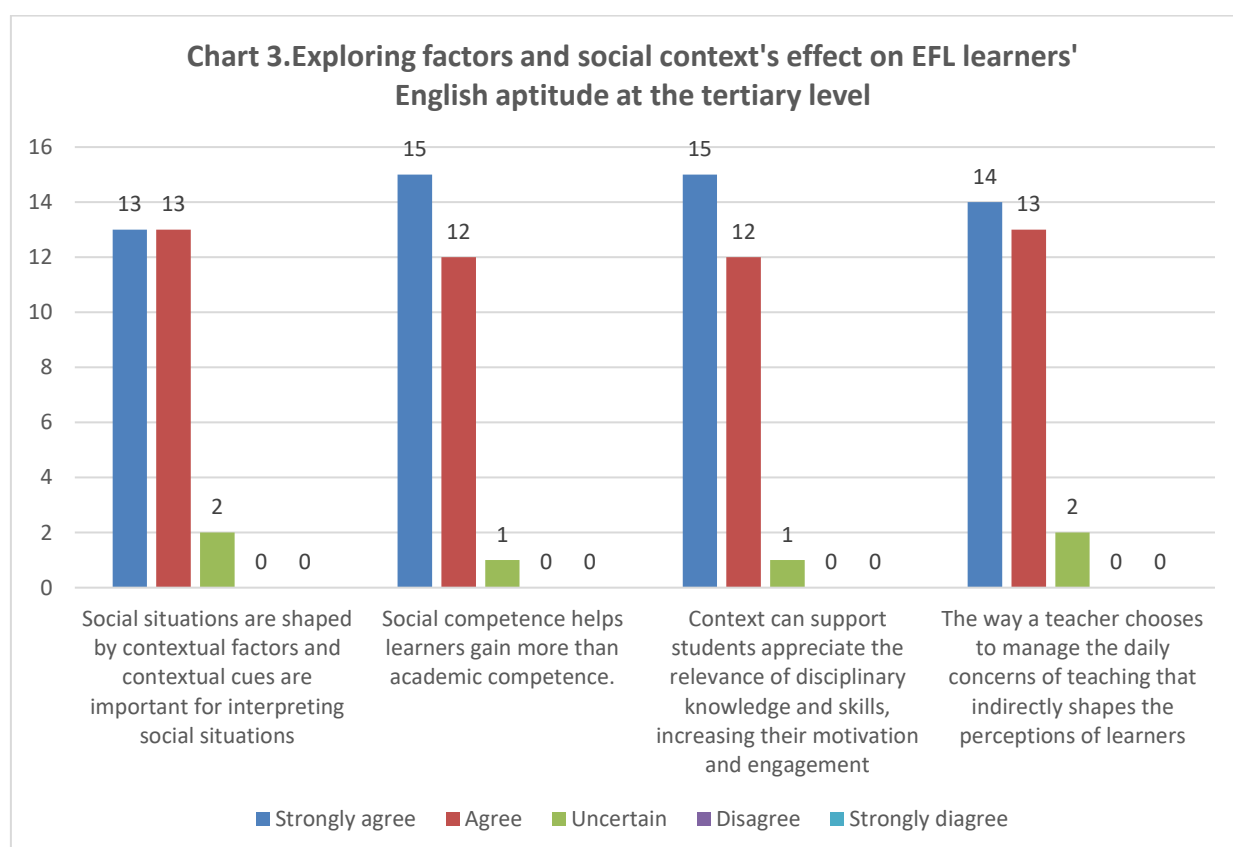

Figure 3: Exploring the effect of factors and social context on EFL learners' English aptitude at the tertiary level

Shown in Figure 3 are responses about the effect of factors and social context on EFL learners' English aptitude at the tertiary level. 13% of the participants 'strongly agree' that 'social situations are shaped by contextual factors and contextual cues are important for interpreting social situations'; 13% 'agree', and 2% are 'uncertain'. It was found that 15% of the participants 'strongly agree' that 'social competence helps learners gain more than academic competence', while 12% 'agree' and only 1% indicated 'uncertain'. Moreover, 15% of the participants 'strongly agree' that 'context can help students appreciate the relevance of disciplinary knowledge and skills, increasing their motivation and engagement'; 12% indicated 'agree'; and only 1% selected 'uncertain'. Additionally, 14% of the participants 'strongly agree' that 'the way a teacher chooses to manage the daily

concerns of teaching indirectly shapes the perceptions of learners', 13% indicated 'agree', and 2% 'uncertain'.

4.4. Investigating the significant influence of sociolinguistic characteristics on the educational context and the growth and use of English as a foreign language

Investigating the significant influence of sociolinguistic characteristics on the educational context and the growth and use of English as a foreign language result in raising social and cultural awareness so that students will know how to interpret the surrounding environment.
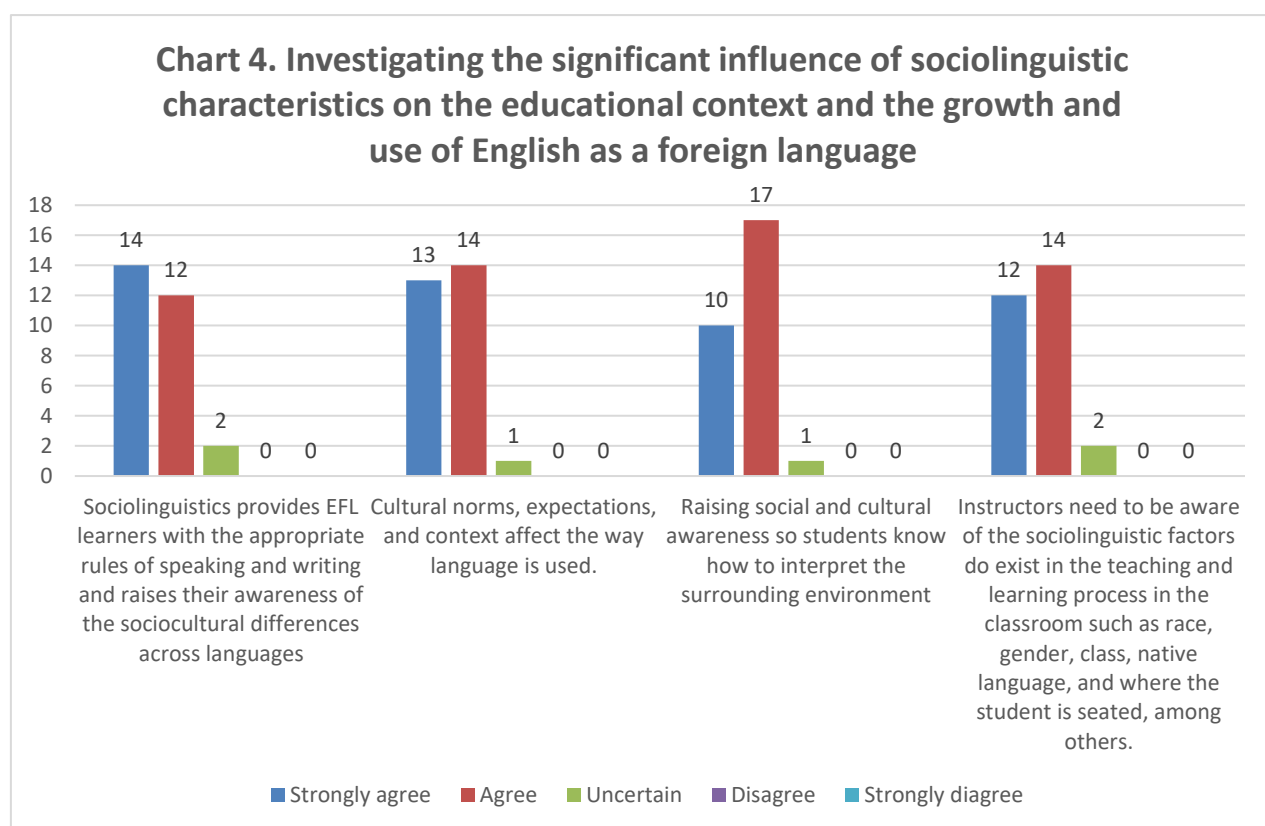

Figure 4: Investigating the significant influence of sociolinguistic characteristics on the educational context and the growth and use of English as a foreign language

In investigating the significant influence of sociolinguistic characteristics on the educational context and the growth and use of English as a foreign language, as shown in Figure 4, 14% of the participants 'strongly agree' that 'sociolinguistics provides EFL learners with the appropriate rules of speaking and writing and raises their awareness of the sociocultural differences across languages'; 12% 'agree', and 2% of the respondents were 'uncertain'. In addition, 13% of the participants 'strongly agree' that 'cultural norms, expectations, and context affect the way language is used', while 14% of them 'agree', and only 1% of the respondents were 'uncertain'. Furthermore, it is found that 10% of the participants 'strongly agree' that 'raising social and cultural awareness so students know how

to interpret the surrounding environment is important'; 17% 'agree', and only 1% of the respondents were 'uncertain'. Finally, 12% of the participants 'strongly agree' that 'instructors need to be aware of the sociolinguistic factors that do exist in the teaching and learning process in the classroom, such as race, gender, class, native language, and where the student is seated, among others', while 14% of them 'agree', and 2% of the respondents indicated 'uncertain'.

4.5. Describing the close relationship between social and educational settings and the classroom environment as factors suitable for fostering sociolinguistic competence in EFL learners and the desired outcomes

By describing the close relationship between social and educational settings and the classroom environment as factors suitable for fostering sociolinguistic competence in EFL learners and the desired outcomes, we explored whether culture and education are two inseparable parameters although they are interdependent and whether EFL learners need to master the cultural rules of use and rules of discourse.
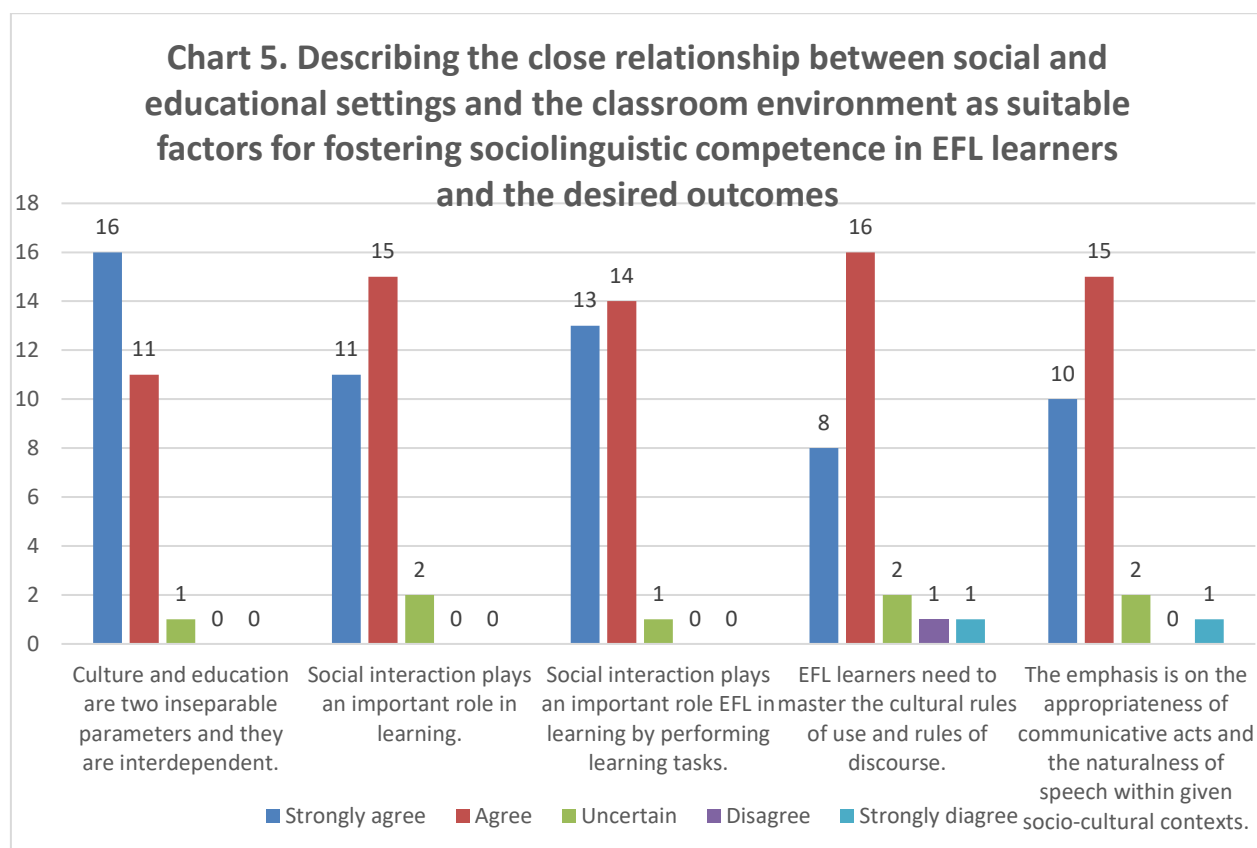

Figure 5: Describing the close relationship between social and educational settings and the classroom environment factors suitable for fostering sociolinguistic competence in EFL learners and the desired outcomes

Figure 5 describes the close relationship between social and educational settings and the classroom environment factors suitable for fostering sociolinguistic competence in EFL learners and the desired outcomes. It is shown that 'culture and education are two inseparable parameters and they are interdependent', with

which 16% of the participants 'strongly agree', 11% 'agree', and only 1% was 'uncertain'; 'social interaction plays an important role in learning', with which 11% of the participants 'strongly agree', 15% 'agree', and 2% of the participants were 'uncertain'; 'social interaction plays an important role in EFL learning by performing learning tasks', with which 13% of the participants 'strongly agree', 14% 'agree', and only 1% of the participants were 'uncertain'; 'EFL learners need to master the cultural rules of use and rules of discourse', to which 8% of the participants responded 'strongly agree', 16% 'agree', 2% 'uncertain', 1% 'disagree', and 1% of the participants reacted with 'strongly disagree'. Lastly, for 'the emphasis is on the appropriateness of communicative acts and the naturalness of speech within given socio-cultural contexts', 10% of the participants responded with 'strongly agree', 15% with 'agree', 2% were 'uncertain', and only 1% indicated 'strongly disagree.'

5. Conclusion

The research shows that the use of a socio-pedagogical approach to teaching EFL in Saudi universities can have a positive impact on the EFL issues in the country. It is recommended that EFL instructors in Saudi universities take a socio-pedagogical approach to teaching the language and that universities provide teachers and students with adequate resources to help them understand the language. By taking these steps, universities can ensure that their students are able to effectively use the language and avoid confusion and misunderstanding. The research results demonstrate that the instructors have a positive view of the EFL issues in their universities and that their teaching has a positive impact on EFL issues. The instructors believe that teaching the language in its natural context is the most effective approach to teaching the language, and the students report that the instructors' teaching has a positive impact on their understanding of the language. This indicates that these sociolinguistic issues should be addressed in the teaching of EFL in Saudi universities.

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Appendix

The Questionnaire:

Areas of improvement in explaining instructors' vital role in changing language education					
Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Language proficiency					
Pedagogical knowledge and skills					
The student's understanding					
The balance between explicit and implicit teaching					
Membership in the teaching community					
Engage in lifelong learning					
The use of technology					
Promoting student participation					
Protecting their own health					
Future EFL instructors require education that considers linguistic, socio-historical, cultural, and pedagogical aspects					
Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
EFL instructors should consider and understand the relevance of the learning environment in the teaching/ learning process.					
EFL instructors should have an understanding of the socio-cultural background of the learner.					
EFL instructors need to consider the cultural differences of the students in implementing activities in the classroom.					

EFL instructors should be aware of their own background culture and identity.					
EFL instructors need to cultivate the relationship between belief and practice to ensure better language learning outcomes					

Exploring factors and social context's effect on EFL learners' English aptitude at the tertiary level

Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Social situations are shaped by contextual factors and contextual cues are important for interpreting social situations					
Social competence helps learners gain more than academic competence.					
Context can support students to appreciate the relevance of disciplinary knowledge and skills, increasing their motivation and engagement					
The way a teacher chooses to manage the daily concerns of teaching that indirectly shape the perceptions of learners					

Investigating the significant influence of sociolinguistic characteristics on the educational context and the growth and use of English as a foreign language

Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Sociolinguistics provides EFL learners with the appropriate rules of speaking and writing and raises their awareness of sociocultural differences across languages.					
Cultural norms, expectations, and context affect the way language is used.					
Raising social and cultural awareness so that students					

know how to interpret the surrounding environment					
Instructors need to be aware of the sociolinguistic factors that exist in the teaching and learning process in the classroom, such as race, gender, class, native language, and where the student is seated, among others.					
Describing the close relationship between social and educational settings and the classroom environment as suitable factors for fostering sociolinguistic competence in EFL learners and the desired outcomes					
Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Culture and education are two inseparable parameters, and they are interdependent.					
Social interaction plays an important role in learning.					
Social interaction plays an important role in EFL learning when performing learning tasks.					
EFL learners need to master the cultural rules of use and rules of discourse.					
The emphasis is on the appropriateness of communicative acts and the naturalness of speech within given socio-cultural contexts					