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Option: Linguistics

> ## Using Digital Storytelling to Enhance Students' Cross-Cultural Competence in Learning Foreign Language: Teachers' and Students' perspectives.
>
> ## Case Study: EFL Teachers and First-Year Master Students at the University of 8 Mai 1945, Guelma

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Letters and English Language in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in Language and Culture

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Dedication

I dedicate this humble study to

My adorable parents, **SALIH** *and* **FATIMA**, *for believing in me and supporting me*

throughout my enthusiastic journey, I am really blessed to have such wonderful parents.

My lovely sisters, **LINDA, ISRAA** *and* **TAKWA,** *for their love, care and encouragement.*

My dear partner, **Ghaloussi Amina,** *for being such an important piece of my story.*

My incredible friends, **Bouthaina, Nardjess,** *for your support*

My beautiful girls **Asma, Nouha, Wala, Wafa,** *and* **Amina,** *for the unforgettable years.*

To my family.

To Me.

Lina

Dedication

This work is dedicated to the most precious people in my life who have supported me

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Abstract

Digital learning has improved language teaching and learning by adding new and innovative techniques that will help learners foster their language competences. Correspondingly, the present study seeks to raise teachers and EFL learners' awareness towards the importance of integrating digital storytelling to enhance EFL learners' cross-cultural competence. The needed data was collected by means of quantitative descriptive method in which two questionnaires were administered to fifty first-year master students and fifteen teachers at the department of Letters and English Language, University of 8 May 1945, Guelma. The results showed that both teachers and learners are aware of the significance of being cross-culturally competent. Moreover, the participants insisted on the important role digital technology plays in teaching the target culture. Accordingly, the acquired data confirmed the research validity, which implies that both teachers and learners have a positive attitude towards using digital storytelling to enhance students' cross-cultural competence. Thus, it is recommended that teachers must integrate more technological tools in the classroom, and raise learners' awareness towards the importance of using digital storytelling to enhance their cultural communicative competence.

Key words: EFL classroom, Digital storytelling, Cross-cultural competence.

List of Abbreviations

CCC: Cross-cultural competence.

CDS: Center for digital storytelling.

DST: Digital Storytelling.

EFL: English as a foreign language.

ICT: Information and communication technologies.

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General Introduction

The advancements in technology resulted in the development of teaching materials which facilitate the learning and teaching process, as it increased opportunities for teachers to be more creative to help their students to master the foreign language and build a rich background about the its culture. Cross-cultural competence (CCC) gives foreign language (FL) learners the capacity to communicate effectively with natives. Moreover, digital storytelling (DST) is a technological tool through which learners can tell stories using images and videos to present a story. Therefore, the current study will explore teachers' and students' attitudes towards the importance of integrating of digital storytelling to improve EFL learners' cross-cultural competence.

1. Statement of the Problem

Foreign language learners need to develop different language skills such as listening, reading, writing and speaking, as well as be familiar with its culture in order to communicate effectively with natives. In addition, foreign language teachers attempt to bring innovative teaching techniques that facilitate the process of language teaching and learning. However, teachers at the Department of English, University of 8 May 1945, Guelma, encounter some difficulties in teaching the culture of the target language and helping their learners improve their cross-cultural competences. As a result, integrating digital storytelling into the teaching and learning process may help teachers introduce culture related topics for their learners in an effective manner.

2. Research Questions

Developing EFL learners' cross-cultural competence requires the integration of digital materials in EFL classrooms. Therefore, the current study aims at answering the following questions:

1. Are EFL learners aware of the importance of learning the foreign culture?

2. What attitudes do EFL teachers have towards DST as teaching material?

3. Do EFL teachers integrate the use of digital storytelling in the process of teaching?

4. To what extent does DST contribute to the process of enhancing EFL learners' cross-cultural competence?

3. Purpose of the Study

Digital storytelling is a learning material used in EFL classes; it helps learners to be competent in the target language culture. Hence, the aims of this research are fourfold:

1. To raise learners' awareness towards the importance of learning foreign language culture.

2. Investigate teachers and learners' attitudes towards DST.

3. To highlight the significance of the integration of digital storytelling in EFL classrooms.

4. To examine the effectiveness of digital storytelling in developing learners' cross-cultural competence.

4. Research Hypothesis

The present dissertation aims at investigating the role of digital storytelling in enhancing FL learners' cross-cultural competence. Thus, we hypothesize that:

1. **H1:** using digital storytelling in EFL classroom will enhance learners' cross-cultural competence.

2. **H0:** using digital storytelling in EFL classroom will not enhance learners' cross-cultural competence.

5. Research Methodology and Design

5.1. Research Method

For the purpose of gathering reliable data concerning the integration of DST in EFL classrooms, a quantitative descriptive design will be carried out. This design provides

researchers with the appropriate and practical tools of data gathering from a large number of participants; hence, they would collect reliable information.

5.2. Population and Sampling of the Study

The population of this study includes first-year Master students and teachers at the department of English, Guelma University 8 May 1945. The first sample consists of fifty (50) students and the second one includes fifteen (15) teachers. The purpose of selecting this sample is that first-year Master students have enough knowledge about the language and are familiar with its culture, also their aim at this stage is to improve their intercultural competences. Thus, their answers will be valid for the results of the research. Further, the teachers chosen are the ones who usually use technological devices while teaching, which means that they would provide reliable contribution to the present study.

5.3. Data Gathering Tool

In order to achieve valid results and test the hypothesis, two questionnaires will be distributed to first-year Master students and their teachers at the department of English, university of Guelma. The students' questionnaire seeks to gather information about their perceptions about DST as a learning technique, and its role in developing cross-cultural competence. While the teachers' questionnaire aims at investigating their views about the implementation of DST in EFL classrooms and how it helped in developing their learners' cross-cultural competence.

6. Structure of the Dissertation

This study is divided into two parts. A theoretical part that consists of two chapters. Correspondingly, the first chapter 'Digital Storytelling', deals with the definition of storytelling, and digital storytelling along with its elements, process, and importance in education. The

second chapter 'Cross-Cultural Competence', deals with a review about culture and how it is taught in a EFL classroom. In addition, it addresses cross-cultural competence, its importance, and how foreign language learners can improve it. Furthermore, the practical part includes one chapter entitled 'Field investigation'; it deals with descriptions and results of both teachers' and students' questionnaires. Finally, the research concludes with a general conclusion, pedagogical implications, a proposed model lesson, some shortcomings that limited this study, and some recommendations for further research.

Chapter One
Digital Storytelling

Content

Introduction

The present chapter aims at underlying the significance of implementing digital storytelling in education, particularly in an EFL classroom. Therefore, the chapter first starts by discussing the definition of storytelling and its evolution. Then, it deals with digital storytelling, its definition, elements, types, process, characteristics, along with its use and importance in education. It also highlights digital learning as the base of digital storytelling, its types and its characteristics.

1.1 Digital Learning

Nowadays, information and communication technologies (ICT) administers the 21st century learning. It leads to the creation of new teaching and learning resources, methods, and opportunities, which means that technology has become an essential part of todays' education. Moreover, todays' generation of learners tend to use technological devices while learning since it encourages them to learn better; for this purpose, Russel and Sorge (1999) claimed that technology allows students to have more responsibility over their own learning experience by encouraging their analytical and critical thinking (p.9); in which some researchers to call them the digital generation because they have what is called the digital literacy i.e., how to use the digital devices and ICTs. Additionally, the professor of literacy and technology at North Carolina University, Hiller Spires, stated that there are three mechanisms of digital knowledge: searching and using internet data, designing online materials, and exchanging online materials (2015). Furthermore, digital learning is simply the learning that relies on technological devices and systems. According to Alliance Excellent Education (2012),

Digital learning is any instructional practice that is effectively using technology to strengthen the student learning experience. Digital learning encompasses a wide spectrum

of tools and practice, including using online and formative assessment, increasing focus and quality of teaching resources and time, online content and courses, applications of technology in classrooms and school building, adaptive software for students with special needs, learning platforms, participating in professional communities of practice, providing access to high level and challenging content and instruction, and many other advancements technology provides to teaching and learning.

Hence, media sources are the base of digital learning which makes it more interested for learners to follow it.

1.1.1 Types of Digital Learning

There are many platforms and websites that provide a good learning experience to everyone. In addition, there are many types of digital learning so that learners can choose and work according to the type that is appropriate to their needs and educational objectives. First, the commonly used form of digital learning is The Massive open Online Courses (MOOCs). Simply speaking, it is a set of virtual lectures that can be recordings or PowerPoint presentations that are prepared in advance; also, students can access them whenever they need to. These lessons maintain predetermined plan and are available in websites like Google, YouTube, and Microsoft and others that provide online lessons for free.

Second, The Small Private Online Courses, this form is destinated to instruct specific group of learners in a given topic; hence, they are dissimilar to MOOCs. In order to get access to these lessons, learners need to subscribe to the system to find prepared lectures.

Third, Mobile Learning is another type of digital learning, and it is a set of teaching programs that are created for people whose lifestyle is hectic. Moreover, users of mobile learning can utilize it on the move, in other words, they can attend recorded lectures and take tests anytime and anywhere they want.

Forth, another type of digital learning is Simulated Learning. It is kind of training program designed for participants who want to ameliorate their competences. For that purpose, it relies on real-life situations using virtual reality (VR). As a result, participants will have a chance to implement the recently acquired capacities without attempting any unpleasant consequences.

Finally, Online Classrooms is another type that uses LMS which helps to set up digital courses and collaborations. Also, it allows users to attend them concurrently or non-concurrently. This form is an excellent choice for people who run international businesses and communicate virtually. Additionally, there are different ways to use digital storytelling in brands content to tell their story through different channels (Escuadro, 2022).

1.1.2 Advantages of Digital Learning

Digital learning has a considerable influence on teaching and learning; both processes become effortless and flexible. Digital learning provides learners with numerous resources in different forms and styles. It, also, offers various platforms and programs that are easy to use and adaptable to the extent that anyone can benefit from them anytime anywhere. According to a study done by Eliza Montes (2022), digital learning stimulates individualized or it can be called self-directed learning, in which learners can cover their own educational requirements and objectives, learn how to manage their time, identify the learning strategies that suits them, and take responsibility of their own education. Simply put, each student can have his/her independent learning experience because students are able to search, research and evaluate data on their own.

In addition, students are not only able to acquire new skills but also to improve previous ones because digital education follows a competency-based approach in which learners can learn at their own pace. Furthermore, it encourages collaborative learning, where learners can work with peers or in groups and learn from each other either in virtual or actual classes; and

blended learning in which they can use digital devices to prepare their lessons and present them in their classrooms. It also can be used for digital assessment since learners are responsible for their education, they can evaluate their progress through taking online quizzes and tests.

1.2 Storytelling

Storytelling can be used to explain a concept, to reflect on a personal experience, to retell historical event, or to make an argument.

1.2.1 Definition of Story

Stories are considered as an old form of communication, and they are the earliest genre of literature that had sustained and transmitted the civilization, traditions, and lifestyles of ancient communities (Stein, 1982, p.487). Sharing and telling stories is a human nature; humans need to communicate their thoughts, feelings, and their lifestyles through various forms of stories with others in order to teach and learn others' culture. Thus, a story is "a description, either true or imagined, of a connected series of events" (Cambridge University Press, n.d.). Basically, stories have been documenting people's lives, events, rituals, and culture since the dawn of humanity, and carrying them from one generation to another through storytelling.

1.2.2 Definition of Storytelling

Storytelling is cultural ritual practiced by individuals across centuries. It is a human experience that enabled humans throughout history to communicate features about themselves, the others, and the world around them. Simply put, storytelling is the act of narrating or telling stories. According to Gere (2002), storytelling is "the act of using language and gesture in colorful ways to create scenes in a sequence" (p.2). It means that storytelling visualizes the story being told. Also, storytelling is "the activity of telling or writing stories" (Oxford University Press, n.d.). Moreover, Behmar stated that "storytelling is a process where students

personalize what they learn and construct their own meaning and knowledge from the stories they hear and tell" (2005).

Behmar definition suggests that when storytelling is used in education it helps students to be autonomous learners. Along the same line, Olivier Serrat defines storytelling as "the use of stories or narratives as communicative tool to value, share, and capitalize on the knowledge of individuals" (2008, p.1). He also claimed that it is the realistic depiction of humans' thoughts, ideologies, and understanding of life. That is to say, storytelling is not only an entertainment activity in which people share stories to have fun, but also an educational one that enables individuals to have an insight into their own thoughts and perceptions and to understand others' perceptions.

1.2.3   Importance of Storytelling

Storytelling has played a major role in the growth of societies throughout history. As previously mentioned, storytelling is an activity that help people understand life, themselves, and others through the moral lessons and meanings that stories convey. According to Stein (1982), stories were accustomed to carry the culture of a particular society from one generation to another, and sometimes, a story might be the only document of the history (p. 489). Correspondingly, storytelling allowed people to explore their own ancestral culture as well as looking into others' culture, this idea is considered the traditional and the main aim of telling stories i.e., to preserve and transmit cultures. In addition, storytelling is not only used for communicative purposes but also for educational ones. Interestingly, they are seen as a simple way to clarify difficult concepts like natural phenomena and ethical principles of different communities for kids because people generally remember things better when they are told in a form of story (Stein, 1982, p.490).

Furthermore, teachers rely on such technique to help their students improve literacy skills, especially in FL classrooms. In the same line, Kozlovich (2002, p9) claimed that

> Storytelling in any form is a natural way for students to build literacy skills. Learning how to tell a story by writing it down, talking about it, and learning to actively listen to someone else's story- all of these activities teach important language skills in meaningful contexts.

Hence, storytelling helps foreign language learners to develop the four language skills. It is, also, a significant tool that students can adopt to easily convey meanings, perspectives, and knowledge to others in a multicultural classroom. According to Haris (2017) stories provide effective learning by linking daily life with the content of the lessons.

To sum up, story is an entertainment, learning and teaching tool with the intention to communicate one' thoughts and emotions as well as learning about others.

1.2.4 Evolution of Storytelling

Ever since the dawn of humanity, storytelling had played a major role in humans' lives. It allowed people to record their experiences, traditions, rules, and history; and to transmit them from one generation to another throughout the centuries. Lambert (2013, p.4) claimed that storytelling help people make sense of the world. In addition, it is a human nature to tell stories however the way they are told had changed as people were changing. The first form of storytelling is called the visual storytelling, and it was the paintings created by cave men. They used to draw a series of drawings that depict a particular event using primitive natural materials such as stones and woods.

The second form is the oral storytelling, in which stories were transmitted in form of songs, myths, and legends. Correspondingly, with the invention of the radio, telling stories became much easier. Moreover, the third form is the written stories in paper. Concerning this

form people started to write down everything that they experienced in life. Likewise, photography is another form of telling stories, so instead of writing they take pictures which help visualize the event better. Finally, digital storytelling, the newest form of storytelling, is a merge between the traditional oral storytelling and the 21st century technologies (A Brief History of Storytelling, n.d.).

To sum up, storytelling has really influenced people's lives. It depicts and describes how people used to live, learn, communicate, and think; and it shows how history was created and changed.

1.3 Digital Storytelling

The shift of storytelling from the traditional to the digital form was started by Dana Atchley who was a media producer and an artist in multi disciplines. In the early 1990s, he collaborated with Joe Lambert in utilizing multimedia technologies to transmit traditional story to digital. Then, in 1994, Nina Mullen joined them and they established the San Francisco Digital Media Center which later became Center for Digital storytelling (CDS) (Center for Digital Storytelling, n.d.). In addition, the CDS had provided a definition to digital storytelling (DST) which claims that it is "a modern expression of the ancient art of storytelling" (2011).

Later on, many scholars attempted to define digital storytelling, and most of them agree on the fact that digital storytelling is a combination of the traditional storytelling with multimedia elements such as images, videos, podcasts, graphics, and e-books. Furthermore, it is considered a twenty-first century learning mode as stated by Jenkins (2009); which indicates that DST is also used as teaching-learning tool. According to Jokela, Lehikoinen and Korhen (2008), "storytelling has a strong history as an oral tradition, but it has evolved and extended to utilize new technological advances and media types as they have emerged including written and

printed media and more recent electronic and digital media" (p. 6 3). So, technology has changed the ways, and pace at which, people tell their stories.

Additionally, Benmayor stated that DST is a short multimedia story that combines voice, image, and music (2008, p.188). The most important element of any storytelling is the voice, how it is told. Using digital devices strengthens this element with the use of animation, colors, and images. Furthermore, Normann (2011) claimed that a digital story is 2-3 minutes long in which the storyteller records it, and it focus of the personal element. He also added that

> People have always told stories. It has been part of our tradition and heritage and since the time we gathered around the fire to share our stories. Today people still tell stories but now we have new media tools with which to share them. A digital story can hence be seen as a merge between the old storytelling tradition and the use of new technology.

In the 21st century, people can easily share stories whenever they want because everything is available to them.

1.3.1 Elements of Digital Storytelling

When writing any story, the writer must make sure that it contains particular elements, such as the characters, the plot, the theme, and the setting. All these elements help to create a good story. Correspondingly, designing a digital story also relies on certain elements that enable the storyteller to deliver the actual meaning of the story. Moreover, the elements of digital story were developed by some experts of the CDS namely Lambert, Mullen, Paul, Fiebich, Porter, Salpeter, Robin, Ohler, and Schafer. At first, each one of them proposed his own elements, then the elements which were in common were defined as the core elements of digital storytelling. The following are the main elements of digital storytelling :

1. **Point of View:** The story's main theme and the author's point of view.

2. **A dramatic question:** A key issue that captures the interest of the audience and that will be solved at the story's conclusion.

3. **Emotional content**: A significant topics that address the audience in a potent and intimate way.

4. **The gift of your voice:** A method of customizing the narrative that will enable the receivers to comprehend the setting.

5. **The power of the soundtrack:** Any audio that strengthens the story, such as music.

6. **Economy:** Providing sufficient data to convey the exact meaning without burdening the audience.

7. **Pacing:** The rhythm of the story and how rapidly or steadily it develops.

Figure 1.1: *The Core Elements of Digital Storytelling* (Center for Digital Storytelling, 2003)

These elements are extremely important because they help the storyteller maintain the traditional aim of storytelling, and the use of multimedia tools strengthens the story. Along the same line, Ohler (2008) added that "the goal is to preserve what works from the world of oral storytelling and take advantage of the power that digital technology offers without being distracted by it" (p.70). Nevertheless, teachers are being creative and they are developing their own ways to use DST in the classrooms and help their learners achieve better academic outcomes.

To conclude, the structure of digital storytelling contains more or less the same elements as all narratives: There is an audience, a narrator, and a plot. The plot will revolve around a conflict and will have one or more protagonists.

1.3.2   Types of Digital Storytelling

There are different types of digital storytelling, each type has its own objectives and message to tell. The following are the major three types of digital storytelling that students can tell.

a) Personal Narratives

Generally speaking, people create digital stories to share their personal life experiences that indicate how they perceive themselves, others, and the world. *How Did I Become Asian American* is a good example of a digital story that tell a personal story. The story describes the experience of Katherine Hwa and how she grew up in the US as an Asian-American, in addition to the challenges she faced as a second-generation immigrant (Hwa, 2018). Teachers can use this type of digital stories to discuss serious subjects such as race, multiculturalism, religion, immigration, and ethnicity. Furthermore, teachers can ask their students to prepare their own digital stories where they express themselves; this will help in reducing the misunderstandings among them and will enable them to interact effectively with each other, especially in a multicultural classroom (The Educational Use of Digital Storytelling, n.d.).

b) Stories that Examine Historical Events

Historical events can also be content material for a digital story, which creates another type of digital storytelling. Such stories present historical events in an animated way, in other words, they add colors to history. Thus, learners would be interested in learning more about history. Likewise, *Black & White* is a story made by Krystal Scott about how slaves reshaped

Virginia with the African views and values of the slave population that gradually influenced thoughts and lifestyle of the native white population (Scott, 2007). For instance, in civilization module a teacher can present lectures in a form of digital storytelling, either s/he brings a digital story made by someone else or s/he can design a new one where s/he can add the details that his/her students need to know (The Educational Use of Digital Storytelling, n.d.).

    c) Stories that Inform or Instruct

The last type of digital storytelling is the stories that inform or instruct. This type is mostly used in scientific subjects such as math in order to show the steps to be followed to solve a particular equation; in science, as how to analyze something. In addition, it can be a story that provides the process of doing something, for example, the process of digital storytelling (The Educational Use of Digital Storytelling, n.d.).

1.3.3   The Process of Digital Storytelling

For the purpose of writing a good digital story, learners have to follow the digital storytelling process. The process would guide them and help them plan the content and the materials they need for their story. The following process is proposed by EdTechTeacher (2016) :

1. **Start with an Idea:** Every story begins with an idea that could be the topic of a lesson, a question, or a difficult concept. Once the teacher and the learners agree on the idea or the subject of the story, they can start brainstorming or even drawing a mind-map i.e., writing all possible points that are related to the topic in order to make the story visible. Another important point that would help them choose the topic is to determine first the type of the story they are willing to create in order to choose to appropriate materials.

2. **Research, Explore, and Learn:** In this step, learners would start researching about the topic and collecting the needed information. Then, they should organize the gathered

data, and make an outline for the story. Besides, it is better for them to organize it digitally, for instance, using online note-taking tools to make the process easier.

3. **Write/ Script:** After collecting the necessary information and organizing it, learners now can write a script of the story. In the writing step, they should focus on the language used, vocabulary, grammar, also, they need to make sure to use simple language. Pay attention to the order of the points which one comes first.

4. **Storyboard/ Plan:** In this step, students are asked to draw pictures to show the order of the points that will be included in the story. It, also, helps them plan the images and videos that they will include or create.

5. **Gather and Create Images, Audio and Video:** Storyboarding will allow students to choose the appropriate materials for their story. They can either create their own in order to avoid copyright problems or they can use available videos an audio if they are not going to share them on the internet.

6. **Put it All Together:** At this phase, students need to assemble the pieces of the story all together, and they will revise and edit it, for example making transitions between images or videos before sharing it.

7. **Share:** Before sharing the story, educators first should see what are the websites that their school or teacher allows them to share their story in. Also, they should know the setting of the website to share their story easily.

8. **Reflection and Feedback:** After sharing the story, students will receive some comments about the topic, the materials, and the way it was organized.

Figure 1.2: *8 Steps to Great Digital Storytelling* (EdTechTeacher, 2016).

1.3.4   Characteristics of Digital storytelling

Digital storytelling offers interactivity and give the audience the chance to interact with the storyteller as it allows the viewers to be part of the story. In addition to interactivity, Handler Miller (2008) discusses some basic characteristics of digital storytelling, and how they can affect the interaction between the story, the audience and the medium itself.

First, digital storytelling breaks the fourth wall, i.e., the barrier which traditionally separates the audience from the actors playing the drama is frequently broken by the digital stories. Characters may interact directly with the audience members or is possible for the audience to enter the plot and interact with the characters in the play.

Second, it blurs fiction and reality, which means that when reading or watching a traditional story, it is easy to depict that the work is fiction. However, in digital storytelling using contemporary communication tools such as phones, emails, faxes, makes it hard for the audience to distinguish between real events and fiction ones.

Third, it vastly expands the story Universe by including a variety of media that are connected to reinforce the central narrative. Additionally, Digital narrative is transmitted through digital media such as web pages and blogs, social media channels, and mobile applications. The magic of digital storytelling is that anyone at any time and in any situation can create their content and tell their story.

Forth, it offers Deeply Immersive Experiences, unlike traditional stories which involve only two of our senses, seeing and hearing, digital stories include also touching and even smelling.

Fifth, it allows for other kinds of participations, it offers variety ways for the audience members to be involved in the story. Thanks to computer technology in these new narratives. Finally, digital storytelling provides characters with artificial intelligence which makes them realistic.

In conclusion, it is apparent that digital storytelling is the fruit of an effective combination between traditional means of telling stories and creative multimedia tools. It is important to consider that digital storytelling had opened up new methods for working with both discourse and new technologies, which certainly develop a variety of activities that can be useful and inspiring for students.

1.3.5   Digital Storytelling in Education

When discussing storytelling in education, it is shown that storytelling is not just a way to tell fairytales or stories about the past, but also a way for people to share their personal experiences and stories that reflect their culture, religion, and other topics. Besides, using multimedia tools facilitates the process of storytelling. Digital storytelling is also used in schools, and it is beneficial for both teachers and learners.

1.3.6   Digital storytelling as an Effective Instructional Tool for Teachers

Digital storytelling is considered a practical way for teachers to present information and organize it, and they can use this technique to motivate their students and raise their engagement in the classroom. Moreover, Robin (2008) stated that, "teacher created digital stories may also be used to enhance current lessons within a larger unit, as a way to facilitate discussion about the topics presented in a story and as a way to make abstract or conceptual content more understandable" (p.10). Digital Storytelling gives teachers a unique technique to introduce new material for students without spending a long time to help them understand the complex knowledge. Additionally, teachers can construct digital storytelling from the lesson or have their students do so to demonstrate their comprehension of the material. Again, they can use digital storytelling to design activities and meaningful learning assignments that help students construct their own understanding of a topic.

1.3.7   Digital storytelling as an Effective Instructional Tool for Students

Using DST in learning makes the learning process more engaging and realistic. According to Robin (2005) "students who participate in the creation of digital stories may develop enhanced communications skills by learning to organize their ideas, ask questions, express opinions, and construct narratives" (p. 5). In addition, Jakes (2006) affirmed that digital storytelling helps students in exploring the meaning of their personal experience, giving value to it, and sharing the experience to others on numerous levels.

Similarly, according to the University of Houston's College of education stated that digital storytelling "provides a strong foundation in many different types of literacy, including information literacy, visual literacy, technological literacy, and media literacy" (n.d.). These types of literacy were called "Twenty-First Century Literacy Skills" by Brown, Bryan, and Brown (2005). Furthermore, learners will ab able to develop other skills such as reflective skills,

social and communicative skills, collaborative skills, and language skills. Also, they will be able to use digital devices.

In the same vein, Dillon (2014, as cited in Bouchrika, 2021) specified three advantages of using digital storytelling for educational purposes. To begin with, it supports attentive listening since it provides students the opportunity to understand concepts in an effective way. Also, digital stories may elicit students' emotional responses, and they can show sympathy. Finally, students are not just going to learn from stories, but also, they get to share their own experiences with their mates by designing their own digital stories.

To summarize, digital storytelling is a very helpful technique that not only assists learners in their learning process, as well as it facilitates the teaching process. Additionally, it aids leaners from different cultures to interact engage successfully with each other. Also, learners will acquire various skills that they need in their education.

1.3.8 Advantages of Digital Storytelling in EFL Classroom

The technique of digital storytelling can effectively support the teaching and learning process in EFL classroom. It helps EFL teachers to present their lessons in a practical way that will attract learners' attention and raise their motivation. Also, it helps EFL learners to develop skills in many things like using multimedia technologies, communicative skills, and cross-cultural skills. Additionally, it assists learners to improve their English because they will be practicing speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Rance and Roney (2008, p.30) state that "leaners have numerous opportunities to interact and use language in authentic and personal meaningful way".

To sum up, the integration of digital storytelling in EFL classroom will raise learners' motivation and engagement, and they will develop many language competences. Also, using

DST help learners to become more creative and they can design each time a different story. Hence, DST is an essential technique for foreign language teaching and learning.

1.3.9 Challenges of Integrating Digital Storytelling in Education

Although digital storytelling is widely used as an instructional strategy, using it effectively in the teaching process is still a challenge. The problems that arise can be caused by the teacher, the student, and the structure of the course. For example, some teachers still have difficulty in integrating technology in the teaching process (Yang and Wu, 2012, p339-352). Moreover, the lack of teachers' and learners' experience concerning the DST process, the difficulty of storyboarding, and the lack of technological devices may cause a problem in using digital storytelling. In addition, the duration of lecture may not be helpful for teachers to present the lesson in a form of a digital story.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed the notion of digital storytelling along with its elements, process, and its benefits for learners and teachers. It indicated the importance of implementing the technique of digital storytelling in classrooms because it allowed education to be more dynamic, adaptable and personalized. In addition, it helped students to build different skills, particularly cross-cultural competence that will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Two

Cross-Cultural Competence

Content

Introduction

Culture is the base of our lives. It entails beliefs, values, norms, laws, political systems, education, art, music, literature, language, customs, traditions, rituals, religion, and the way a particular group perceives itself and the world around it. Hence it is important to know what is it and of the idea that aspects of culture are the same yet they are perceived and practiced differently which make each culture of a particular community unique. Also, it is important to show respect, understanding, and sensitivity whenever in a cross-cultural situation.

The following chapter dive onto cross-cultural competence. It starts by discussing culture and its various definitions. It also highlights the importance of teaching culture in EFL classroom since language and culture are intrinsically related to each other; along with the different approaches to teaching it. In addition, the second part of the chapter tackles cross-cultural competence, what does it mean to be cross-culturally competent and aware of different cultures. Finally, it sheds light on the relationship between digital storytelling and cross-cultural competence.

2.1 What is Culture?

Culture is a broad and complex concept that has numerous definitions. Duranti (1997), defines culture as "Something learned, transmitted from one generation to the next, through human actions often in the form of face-to-face interaction, and of course through linguistic communication" (p.24). Duranti's definition lacked the items or aspects that human generations learned and communicated over time leading the search for other definitions that stated such transmitted aspects. Accordingly, it is mentioned that Sir Edward B. Tylor gave the first definition of culture. He defines culture as "That complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a

member of society." (Cited in Yue 1999, p.112). According to his definition culture is a very broad notion that covers all elements of human life.

In addition, according to Samovar et al (2000, p.36), culture is "the deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, actions, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and artifacts acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving". In this sense, culture is linked to social groups and the ways of life of its individuals including their manifestations, achievements, arts. Moreover, Spencer-Oatey (2000) stated that, "culture is a fuzzy set of attitudes, beliefs, behavioral conventions, and basic assumptions and values that is shared by a group of people, and that influences each member's behavior and each member's interpretations of the meanings of other people's behavior". (2000 p.3). The social practices that form a culture influence people's behavior, opinions and it represent to them what things mean, what is essential, and what must and must not be done. Sowden (2007) stated that "culture tended to mean that body of social, artistic, and intellectual traditions associated historically with a particular social, ethnic or national group" (pp. 304-305).

To conclude, Culture is a social product that develops as a result of mutual comprehension and agreement among group members. As a result, it is acquired, learned, and passed down through social encounters and exchanges.

2.1.1   Big C Culture, Small c Culture

There are two categories into which culture can be divided: big 'C' and small 'c' culture. According to Jaime Wurzel (2004) big "C" culture is considered as factual knowledge which is shared by everyone within the same community. Moreover, according to Tomalin and Stempleski, it consists geography, institutions, literature, arts, and music. In the other hand, small 'c' culture, often known as "behavior culture" has been defined as "culturally-influenced

beliefs and perceptions, especially expressed through language, but also through cultural behaviors that affect acceptability in the host community." (1993, p.6). It represents beliefs, values, daily life manners, stereotypes, etiquettes of eating and greetings … etc.

2.1.2   Elements of Culture

2.1.2.1 Norms

Norms are the guidelines and rules that imply how people must behave and guide individuals to act in the appropriate way. Shaules (2007) stated that norms are "expectations about what should be done or how things should be done." In other words, norms dictate what is appropriate or inappropriate. It outlines the standards of a given society and, help them to differentiate between good and bad, right and wrong.

2.1.2.2 Values

Every cultural system has its own set of rules for defining what is good and what is bad. Shaules (2007) sees it as "a cultural group's definition of good or bad and serve as criteria to choose between alternatives" (p. 57-58). Samovar, Porter, & McDaniel (2009) claimed that "values tell a member of a culture what is normal by identifying what things are good and bad, or right and wrong." (p. 189). In this sense, individual's actions in a specific cultural setting reflect the values they follow and it represents their perspective about what is good and what is bad.

2.1.2.3 Assumptions

Assumptions are the visible part of culture. They determine how people think, feel and perceive thing is their society. According to Shaules (2007) "cultural assumptions are described as abstracts, organized and general concepts which pervade a person's outlook and behavior"

(as cited in Hinkel, 1999, p.5). Hence, understanding the cultural assemptions means understanding the culture.

2.1.3   Characteristics of Culture

Culture contains five essential characteristics: It is learned, shared, based on symbols, integrated, and dynamic. To begin with, we are not born knowing all of the values, phrases, beliefs, rituals, and so on, but we learn culture from school, family, and media. In this sense, Daniels (2004, p. 92) stated that "A person is not born with cultural concepts but instead learns them through socialization." Additionally, culture is something that everyone shares within the same community. Furthermore, Culture is based on symbols. Symbols are different from one culture to another, and are arbitrary. Among these symbols, art, money, and language. In addition, culture is integrated; the various aspects of a culture being interrelated and in order to truly understand it, people must learn about all of its components, not just a few. Finally, culture is dynamic. Cultures are in a process of change and interaction; because most cultures are in contact with other cultures, they interchange ideas and symbols. All cultures changes, otherwise, they would have difficulty adjusting to different conditions.

2.2 Language and Culture

Sapir "language does not exist apart from culture, that is, from the socially inherited assemblage of practices and beliefs that determines the texture of our lives" (Sapir, 1921, p. 221). Additionally, Brown (2007) stated that "A language is part of culture, and a culture is a part of language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture." (p.189). In this sense, language and culture are interconnected and they complement each other, language can influence cultural practices, and language can be influenced by culture. Because language is seen as a tool of communication, it is responsible for the transmission of cultural knowledge; language is the

main medium via which a culture expresses its components, such as its ideas, customs, and beliefs, as stated by Lappalainen (2011, p.17), "language has a central role as a maintainer and reformer of a culture because it shapes the community's views of the world through texts.". Based on these perspectives, we may conclude that researchers focus on the idea that culture and language cannot exist in isolation rather they are interconnected.

In conclusion, language and culture are inseparable and they influence each other. Based on this strong relationship, teachers in EFL classrooms should not focus only on the linguistic aspects of language, but they must take into consideration the foreign culture of the language they teach.

2.2.1   Teaching Culture

Language is considered to be one of the most crucial components of culture through which individuals transmit their beliefs, values, and norms. As stated by Brown (1994): "A language is a part of a culture, and a culture is a part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture" (p: 164). Since language and culture are interconnected and influence each other, teaching culture should be regarded as an essential component of teaching English as a foreign language. Every EFL instructor should be responsible for teaching the culture by referring to it either explicitly or implicitly and not focusing only on teaching the language.

In late 19th century and early 20th, the implementation of teaching culture was integrated in many methods and approaches of LT. This growing interest towards culture teaching highlights the importance of culture in language teaching. Bada (2000) stated that, "The need for cultural literacy in ELT arises mainly from the fact that most language learners not exposed to cultural elements of the society in question seem to encounter significant hardship in communicating meaning to native speakers." (p.101). It's important to study a

language's culture, because knowing a language's linguistic structure is only one aspect of learning a new language. In this sense, teaching the language without referring to its culture seems to be wrong and insufficient. Similarly, Language and culture are closely linked, and cultural knowledge is essential for understanding the language. According to Kramsch (2006), "culture has always been an integral component of language teaching" (p.11). Therefore, EFL teachers are required to teach students culture in addition to grammar, phonology, and linguistic courses. Furthermore, teaching culture considered to be "language skill" in addition to the four language skills speaking, listening, writing, and reading. As a result, becoming proficient in a new target culture provides learners the capacity to use words and phrases as they want, just like native language users, because they have been taught culture in addition to language. In this regard Kramsch (1993) states:

> If […] language is seen as social practice, culture becomes the very core of language teaching. Cultural awareness must then be viewed as enabling language proficiency… Culture in language teaching is not an expendable fifth skill, tacked on, so to speak, to the teaching of speaking, listening, reading and writing (p. 8)

2.2.2 Goals of Teaching Culture

Teaching culture plays an important role in teaching English as foreign language classrooms, specific goals for teaching culture must take into consideration. The primary goal of foreign language teaching (FLT) is to improve students' capacity to utilize the language effectively and appropriately in a variety of contexts. However, teaching culture aims to facilitate intercultural communication and to provide better and deep understanding of the target culture. Seeley (1993) declared that the goal of teaching culture is for "all students to develop the cultural understanding, attitude, and performance skills needed to function appropriately within a segment of another society and to communicate with people socialized in that culture"

(p. 29). Additionally, highlighting the significance of culture learning in EFL classrooms give the learners the opportunity to became more aware about the foreign culture patterns. It is argued that all goals of culture teaching emphasis the idea of "knowledge about the target culture, awareness of its characteristics and differences between the target culture and the learner's own culture" (Stern, 1992, p. 212).

2.2.3   Importance of Teaching Culture

As previously noted, language and culture are linked together, and language is an integral component of culture. Hence, FL learners should not only focus on learning the FL grammar and vocabulary but also focus on its culture in order to help learners to use the language effectively in its appropriate context. For example, there are some words that their meaning changes from one culture to another; therefore, learners must have an idea about the foreign culture to be able to understand the meaning of the words and to use them efficiently. Thus, many scholars believe that teaching FL must be accompanied with teaching its culture.

Kramsch (1993) emphasized that any language must be taught with an emphasis on its culture that holds meaning to language in order to improve students' communicative competence because leaning only the four skills of language is not enough especially when learners engage in interactions with other people from different culture (p.1).

Along the same line, Soler and Jorda (2007) argued that teaching language have to be incorporated with intercultural or cultural teaching when the purpose is communicative competence. Generally, the aim of learning foreign languages is to communicate with people from all over the world. Following the same manner, Shahriar also stated that "if we teach language without teaching at the same time the culture in which it operates, we are teaching meaningless symbols to which the student attaches the wrong meaning" (2017). Thus, culture provides meaning and context to language symbols, structures and rules.

Furthermore, Bredella (2003) stressed another feature in learning other cultures, he defined it as "reconstructing others' frames of reference and seeing the world through their eyes" (p.228). He believes that for the purpose of understanding how others live, think, and perceive the world, FL learners should be knowledgeable about others' culture to change the way they see others and to show respect.

2.2.4 Approaches to Teaching Culture

2.2.4.1 The comparative Approach

The main focus of the comparative approach is to compare between the learners' native culture and the culture of the target language aiming to know and understand the similarities and the differences between both cultures. Byram and Planet (2000) claim "the comparative approach does involve evaluation but not in terms of comparison with something which is better, but in term of improving what is all too familiar" (p. 189); i.e., showing which culture is the best is not the aim of this approach.

2.2.4.2 The Foreign-Cultural Approach

According to Risager (1998), this approach focuses only on studying the target culture. Besides, it doesn't compare between the native culture of the learners and the foreign one; it only centers around the idea of improving the communicative and cultural competence of the FL learners to be able to deal with different situations in the target culture (p.243-244).

2.2.4.3 The Intercultural Approach

In contrast to the foreign-cultural approach, the intercultural approach is similar to the comparative one. Both, the intercultural and the comparative emphasize the idea that cultures are learned effectively when they are compared. Yet, the main concern is always the target

culture. Moreover, it's aim is to develop intercultural communicative competence so that the learners can be a link between their own culture and the foreign one (Risager, 1998, p.244-245).

2.2.4.4 The Multicultural Approach

This approach draws attention to the foreign culture's ethnic and linguistic diversity with a comparison to the learners' own culture. Risager (2000) states that "the multicultural approach rests upon a concept of culture that reflects the fact that several cultures may coexist within the boundaries of one and the same society or state" (p.246). In other terms, a particular culture is a collection of other cultures.

2.2.4.5 The Transcultural approach

It deals with the target language as an international language, and encourages learners to learn the language in order to be able to use it in international communication. However, this approach doesn't pay attention to the relationship between language and culture.

2.2.4.6 Theme-Based Approach

It is also known as the thematic approach. The concept behind it is to teach certain cultural themes, for example, education, religion, family, art of living, and values. It aims at enabling learners to understand ethical standards of the target culture.

2.2.4.7 Topic-Based Approach

It is similar to the thematic approach, yet it deals with topics about particular cultural subjects. As claimed by Wisniewska-Brogowska a topic-based approach "deals with key elements of current British life, such as class, privatization, education, health, not in isolation but within a series of unifying contexts" (2004, p.35). In addition, she adds "knowing about the people who use the language, understand their behaviors, beliefs and customs increase cultural awareness and promotes greater personal interest both in the language and the culture" (86).

2.2.4.8 Problem-Oriented Approach

This approach aims at making the learners interested more to know about the target culture (TC), and inspire them to do their own research about that culture. Here, the role of the teacher is highly important since s/he should guide and support them. So, "rather than be told to read a book on the general topic chosen, students can be taught to skim and to read carefully only limited sections to their specific area of interest" (Seelye, 1993, p.47).

2.2.4.9 Task-Oriented Approach

It is similar to the previous one in the sense that they both support students to depend on themselves and do their own investigation concerning the TC. However, the task-oriented approach encourages group work, where learners can research, discuss, evaluate, learn from each other about the TC, as well as analyze and compare the results to their own culture (Saluveer, 2004; Tomalin and Stempleski, 1993).

2.3 Cross-Cultural Competence

The aim of teaching and learning culture in EFL classroom is to train learners to be competent cross-cultural speakers and to communicate with individuals from different cultures successfully. Generally speaking, competence means the ability to do something well (Cambridge Dictionary). According to Josef Huber, competence is the ability to respond effectively to different types of situations and events (p.16). Later, he adds that cross-cultural competence is a combination of attitudes, knowledge, understanding and skills, and this combination allows people to respect others, show understanding and appreciation, communicate appropriately and effectively, and also understanding one' own culture (p.16-17). Additionally, Gertsen (1990) defines it as the ability of individuals to function in another culture, which means that they can be flexible in their communication and are able to handle communication conflicts and misunderstandings that might occur because of the cultural

differences. Likewise, Zhang (2007) suggests that the key to establishing an effective cross-cultural engagement is acquiring the necessary understanding of cross-cultural differences. Moreover, the concept of cross-cultural or intercultural competence was defined by numerous researchers.

Cross, Bazron, Dennis, and Issac define cross-cultural competence as "a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enable that system, agency, or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations." (1989, p.13). In this sense, this definition was later modified by Krajewski-Jaime, Brown and Ziefert (1993), and they stated that cross-cultural competence is

> a set of academic and interpersonal skills that allow service providers to increase their understanding and appreciation of cultural similarities and differences within and between groups so that they are able to draw on a particular community's values, traditions, and customs in developing effective and appropriate interventions (p.3).

Correspondingly, William (2001) defines cross-cultural competence as "the ability of individuals and systems to work or respond effectively across cultures in a way that acknowledges and respects the culture of the person or organization being served" (p.1). In the same vein, Lynch and Hanson (2004) view cross-cultural competence as "the ability to think, feel, and act in ways that acknowledge, respect, and build on ethics, [socio-] cultural, and linguistic diversity" (p.43). Further to that, Moule (2005) views cross-cultural competence as the capacity that a teacher acquires to instruct learners from different culture; it requires the instructor to be perceptive and conscious on interpersonal and personal levels, being aware of some cultural features, and establishing a variety of abilities that form the basis for efficient cross-cultural instruction (p.5). According to him, some teachers because they don't have the necessary comprehension of the differences between cultures, they won't be able to teach those learners in an accurate way.

2.3.1   Components of Cross-Cultural Competence

Cross-cultural competence is composed of three components, i.e., the sensitivity to cultural differences, tolerance towards cultural differences and flexibility in dealing with problems of cultural differences, which are from low to high in stratification (Qiufang, 2000, p.9).

1. Sensitivity to Cultural Differences

Having sensitivity to cultural differences implies that individuals engaging in verbal communication can not only recognize the obvious surface-level cultural dissimilarities of the target culture, but also effortlessly identify the underlying, deeply ingrained distinctions between the target culture and the native one. In addition, Bennett (1986) suggests that developing cultural sensitivity requires not only knowledge and skills, but also self-reflection that leads to new understanding, awareness and attitudes. Bennett further submits that the more individuals can recognize and give non- evaluative meanings to cultural nuances and different perspectives, the more culturally sensitive they are. Thus, enhancing intercultural sensitivity entails acquiring new competences and developing one's consciousness. To sum up, cultural differences in deep structure are concealed within people's actions and thoughts and are not directly observable, so it becomes even more crucial to consciously develop sensitivity to these cultural disparities. Furthermore, this sensitivity transcends national boundaries so that participants can communicate effectively.

2. Tolerance towards Cultural differences

Tolerance towards cultural differences pertains to the attitudes one holds regarding those differences, specially whether they find cultural disparities understandable, respectable, or disliked. Some individuals exhibit a sense of cultural superiority, believing that other cultures are inferior compared to their own advanced culture. This can be attributed to the fact that

people are naturally influenced by their native culture, with its ideas and value systems deeply ingrained within them. Consequently, when confronted with a foreign culture that conflicts with their own, they may instinctively respond with incomprehension, dislike, or even a more severe sense of disgust. To foster tolerance towards cultural differences, it is essential to establish a correct and a proper understanding towards the concept of culture so that it becomes more feasible for individuals to demonstrate understanding and tolerance towards foreign cultures through their actions. Additionally, tolerance is contingent on having a broad perspective, the more people comprehend the cultural differences between various countries, the more likely they are to adopt an attitude of understanding and tolerance towards them.

3. Flexibility in addressing Cultural Differences

Flexibility in addressing cultural differences involves two key concepts: the participant's ability to adopt their communication behavior flexibly based on mutual cultural understanding in order to achieve desired outcomes, and the competence to handle communication conflicts arising from cultural disparities. In cross-cultural communication, both participants should show high sensitivity and tolerance towards the cultural differences, making efforts to comprehend each other's communicative norms and bridging the gap as much as possible, this allows for successful communication. Moreover, it is likely to happen when the two sides encounter barriers to effective communication. Thus, participants should express their confusion regarding the opposite culture in verbal communication and understanding the cultural customs of the other party.

2.4 Cultural Awareness

Cultural awareness is an important aspect in teaching and learning culture and a crucial part of being cross-culturally competent. It simply means to be aware of different cultures and the aim behind it is to develop cultural competency and to be able to engage in intercultural

interactions effectively. Cortazzi and Jin (1999) defined cultural awareness as becoming aware or having knowledge about the attitudes, assumptions, perceptions, and principles of individuals who belong to a particular cultural community. In addition, Kuang (2007) stated that cultural awareness involves recognizing the desirable and the undesirable elements of different cultures as well as acknowledging that individuals from various cultural backgrounds have different lifestyles and thought patterns. Generally, people from all over the world have the same aspects of culture; however, each one practice it differently. In the same vein, Kuang represented four degrees of cultural awareness: parochial stage, ethnocentric stage, synergistic stage, and participatory stage.

At the first stage, parochial, which means limited or narrowed, the influence of cultural dissimilarities in ignored since people are only interested in their own culture. At the second stage, cultural differences are also disregarded, individuals at this level consider their ways of doing things are better than others' ways which are also seen as an issue. Furthermore, at the synergistic stage, cultural dissimilarities are not ignored yet recognized; also, people may depend on others' culture according to the circumstances. Here, people are more open to accept others' cultural ways and are ready to use them as new explanations for new situations. Eventually, the participatory stage, as its name indicates, people participate and collaborate to create new behaviors, perceptions, values, and laws shared between them to deal with certain circumstances (2007).

2.5 Relationship between Digital Storytelling and Cross-Cultural Competence

Digital storytelling is an effective technique used to present cultural content; it allowed instructors to be creative in designing and delivering the foreign culture content. Also, it promotes conversation about a variety of subjects, including language, culture. Digital stories help to preserve and transmit cultural knowledge from one generation to another. Thus, digital

storytelling keeps cultures alive as it helps learners to understand the target culture values as well as facilitate and foster cross-cultural interactions; i.e., Digital storytelling considered to be an effective tool for learning about issues related to culture in order to develop Students understanding of other cultures. According to Sola (2016) "digital stories are a valuable tool for data collection since it helps us locate the presence of various cultural patterns in the narratives, using language and concepts of participants" (p. 1). Therefore, digital storytelling can be used as a technique to develop learners' cross-cultural competence.

Conclusion

In conclusion, cross-cultural competence is an essential skill that EFL learners must develop in order to be able to communicate effectively in cross-cultural setting. This chapter dealt with the notion of culture, its characteristics, its relationship with language, and its importance in EFL classroom. Also, it discussed the various approaches to teaching culture. Also, it highlighted the significance of being cross-culturally competent and the effectiveness of using digital storytelling to in developing learners' cross-cultural competence.

Chapter Three

Field of Investigation

Content

Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the practical part of the current study. It sets out the employed methodology to test the research validity, it attempts to reveal EFL teachers and learners' perspectives concerning the use of digital storytelling to develop learners' cross-cultural competence. Moreover, it analyzes the data collected from the two questionnaires that were administered to first-year Master students at the department of English and their teachers with the intention of answering the research questions. It ends up with some pedagogical implications, some shortcomings that limited this study, and some recommendations for further research.

3.1 Choice of the Method

For the purpose of answering the research questions, a quantitative descriptive method is carried out. Hence, two questionnaires were administrated for first-year Master students and their teachers at the department of English, University of 8 May 1945, Guelma. This method was selected for the purpose that questionnaires allow us to collect reliable and valid data about teachers and learners' attitudes concerning the relationship between the use of digital storytelling in an EFL classroom and developing students' cross-cultural competence.

A questionnaire is a list of questions used to collect data from participants about their perspectives and opinions about a particular topic. According to Brown (as cited in Dornyei, 2003, p.3) "questionnaires are any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers". Furthermore, Brace (2008, p.2) claims that questionnaires are data-gathering tools that can be written in different forms and used for various domains. Later, he adds that questionnaires help researchers collect similar perspectives about different topics.

Jones, Murphy, Edward and James (2008, p.16) state that questionnaires are very important data gathering tool, and their advantages are summarized as the following:

➢ Questionnaires offer cheap data gathering and analyzing.

➢ They are easy to arrange and are not time consuming.

➢ Questionnaire can reach large number of populations.

➢ They enable the researcher to collect primary data.

Therefore, questionnaires are effective tools any researcher can use to collect reliable data.

3.2 The Pilot Study

In conducting research by means of a questionnaire, a pilot study is needed. It enables the researcher to evaluate the questionnaire and see whether the questions are clear or not.

The pilot study was conducted on ten teachers and ten students. However, only five teachers and six students had participated in the piloting of the questionnaire. Therefore, their feedback and comments were taken into account in changing some questions and deleting others.

3.3 Population and Sampling

This study is concerned with two types of samples: teachers and students. Two questionnaires were distributed to teachers and to first-year Master students at the department of English, University of Guelma during the academic year 2022-2023. The first sample includes fifteen (15) master teachers. The questionnaire has been distributed to twenty teachers and only 15 answered it. While the second sample includes fifty (50) students, and they were randomly selected from the whole population of (134) student. First-year Master students were chosen to be the research sample because they have a good learning experience in English, also,

they are able to communicate with the language effectively in its appropriate contexts, and they are familiar with its culture. Hence, their aim is to improve their cultural competence.

3.4 Teachers' Questionnaire

3.4.1 Description of Teachers' Questionnaire

The questionnaire is directed to Master one teachers at the department of English; it is designed for the sake of collecting teachers' perspectives towards the implementation of digital storytelling in EFL classrooms with the intention of enhancing learners' cross-cultural competence. It is divided into four sections each one is based on the previous theoretical chapters. It is consisted of twenty (20) questions; thirteen (13) of which are closed questions, and seven (7) are open questions. (See appendix A)

Section one: General Information (Q1-Q3)

In this opening section, teachers are required to identify their years of teaching at the university, their field of specialty. In addition, the modules they are currently teaching.

Section two: Digital Storytelling (Q4-Q10)

This section includes six (6) questions that are intended to explore teachers' attitudes towards the use of DST in EFL classrooms. Precisely, it seeks to see whether or not they integrate technology in the teaching-learning process. Moreover, teachers are requested to define DST depending on their knowledge. As well as, it demonstrates the importance of implementing DST in an EFL classroom.

Section three: Cross-Cultural Competence (Q11-Q16)

This section consists of seven (7) questions that are designed to discover teachers' knowledge about cross-cultural competence, its importance for EFL learners, in addition to the kind of challenges that teachers may find among their students, and how CCC is improved inside the classroom. Moreover, in question eleven (Q11) teachers are required to pick the option that reflects their views concerning culture. The next two questions (Q12 and Q13)

represent how often do teachers incorporate cultural issues while teaching, and to what extent is it important to teach the foreign culture. Furthermore, in the question fourteen (Q14) teachers are requested to state the aim behind teaching the target culture. They are then asked to provide a definition of cross-cultural competence based on their background knowledge (Q15). Additionally, (Q16) provides teachers with four (4) options for enhancing their learners' cross-cultural competence. Finally, teachers are required to identify the possible barriers that may prevent students to cross-culturally communicate (Q17).

Section Four: The Effect of Digital Storytelling on EFL Learners Cross-Cultural Competence (Q18-Q20)

The final section of the questionnaire encompasses three (3) questions. It aims at examining the effectiveness of using DST to improve students' CCC. (Q18) is intended to determine whether or not teachers are interested in using such technique to help their learners be cross-culturally competent. Next, in question nineteen (Q19) teachers are required to explain how they would use DST to present content of the target culture. Finally, in the last question (Q20) they are requested to add any further suggestions or comments about the topic under investigation.

3.4.2 Administration of Teachers' Questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered to twenty (20) teachers on April 18th and 19th, 2023 at the department of English, 8 Mai 1945 University, Guelma. However, only fifteen (15) had answered it. Besides, they took a whole week to recuperate them. We couldn't wait any longer for the others due to time constrains.

3.4.3 Analysis of Results Obtained from Teachers' Questionnaire

Section One: General Information

Question one: How long have you been teaching English? (Including this year)

Teachers' Years of Experience

a. Less than 10 years

b. 10 years

c. More than 10 years

Table 3.1.

Teachers Experience in Teaching English

Years	Number	Percentage
A	5	33%
B	1	7%
C	9	60%
Total	15	100%

The table 3.1 above shows that the majority of teachers (60%) have been teaching English for more than ten years. While (33%) of them have been teaching English less than ten years. Finally, only one instructor (7%) has ten years teaching experience. Therefore, based on these findings we can deduce that most of our participants have a long teaching experience in which they developed different teaching techniques and considerable knowledge about the language and its culture. Which means that they are qualified to help their learners improve their language competence.

Question two: What is your field of specialty?

a. Literature

b. Linguistic

c. Civilization

d. Translation

Table 3.2.

Teachers' Specialty

Field of specialty	Number	Percentage
A	1	7%
B	9	73%
C	1	7%
D	2	13%
Total	15	100%

The largest majority of the respondents (60%) specialized in linguistics as indicated in the table above 3.2. Moreover, the field of specialty of (20%) of them is civilization. Furthermore, (13%) of them are specialized in translation. Finally, only (7%) is specialized in literature.

Question three: Which modules are you currently teaching?

Table 3.3.

Modules Taught by Teachers

Option	Number	Percentage
Literature	4	27%
Civilization	3	20%
Linguistics	2	13%
Race	1	7%
CFLT	1	7%
Oral expression	2	13%
Translation	2	13%
Total	15	100%

The table 3.3 above demonstrates the modules taught by teachers at the department of English. Teaching these modules makes teachers aware of the diverse aspects of ELT/L basically teaching methods, and learners' needs, interests. More importantly, they are attentive about the main views of effective and modern education including technology-based teaching. Thus, they may have clear opinions concerning the integration of DST in the process of teaching.

Section two: Digital Storytelling

Question four: Why do you think we should tell stories?

 a. For entertainment purposes

 b. To construct knowledge about a given topic

 c. To share our stories and declare our values and beliefs

 d. To know more about others' culture

 e. All

Table 3.4.

Teachers' Reasons behind Telling Stories

Options	Number	Percentage
A	0	0%
B	1	7%
C	2	13%
D	3	20%
E	7	46%
A+B+C	1	7%
C+D	1	7%
Total	15	100%

The aim of this question is to know teachers' opinions about why they think we should tell stories. The table above 3.4 shows that the majority of teachers (46%) picked all the provided reasons. In addition, according to (20%) of them the purpose of telling a story is to know more about others' culture. Further to that, (13%) of the teachers stated that sharing our stories and declaring our values and beliefs is the aim behind telling a story. Whereas, (7%) of the respondents think that stories should be told to construct knowledge about a given topic. Again, (7%) of them believe that we should tell stories for entertainment purposes, constructing knowledge about a given topic, as well as sharing our stories and declare our values and beliefs. Finally, only one teacher picked the last two options to be the reasons behind telling a story. This reveals that teachers consider the technique of telling stories as a significant tool to transfer cross-cultural meanings because storytelling is a revealing way to study others' culture.

Question five: Have you ever used the technique of telling stories to present topics or deliver knowledge?

a. Yes

b. No

Table 3.5.

Teachers' Use of Storytelling Technique

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	14	93%
No	1	7%
Total	15	100%

This question is designed to see whether or not teachers use the technique of telling stories in their teaching process. The findings of this question reinforce the results of the previous question in which the participants stated their reasons behind telling stories. Moreover, the table above 3.5 indicates that (93%) an overwhelming majority of the participants rely on this technique to teach various aspects of the foreign language. However, only (7%) of them do not use it. Thus, all the teachers are aware of the necessity of telling stories since stories is a good way to present lessons and attract learners' motivation.

Question six: If yes, please justify!

Table 3.6.

Teachers' Justifications

Option	Number	Percentage
Answered	**13**	**87%**
Not answered	**2**	**13%**
Total	**15**	**100%**

In this question, respondents were required to explain their choice. Accordingly, those who said that they tell stories while teaching here are some of their explanations:

"Usually, I use storytelling either as an attention getter or as a closure or to explain a certain concept".

"As it is a form of communication, it provides the learners with a natural and authentic language input. It is also entertaining, so it keeps learners motivated. This form of language helps learners to develop their syntax, enrich their vocabulary, and enhance coherence".

"Literary texts tell stories of different people and different cultures. Teaching literature is telling stories".

"The technique is used in oral expression class to teach students vocabulary, chronological order of events, and how to relate events and ideas…".

"Once I noticed that students could not understand a particular subject, I try to connect it to a story where I can facilitate the meaning".

Question seven: Do you make use of technological tools in the teaching process?

    a. Yes

    b. No

Table 3.7.

Teachers' Use of Technology in Classroom

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	12	80%
No	3	20%
Total	15	100%

The obtained results show that the highest percentage (80%) represents teachers who integrate technological tools in their classrooms. This means that they are attempting to create new teaching techniques. In this sense, they are trying to facilitate the learning process and makes interesting for learners. Whereas, only three teachers (20%) depend on traditional teaching methods; which means that they follow the lecture-based approach in which they deliver information through readings.

Question eight: In your opinion what does digital storytelling mean?

Table 3.8.

Teachers' Definition of Digital Storytelling

Option	Number	Percentage
Answered	15	100%
Not answered	0	0%
Total	15	100%

Teachers were asked to provide a definition of digital storytelling, here are some of their answers:

"In my humble opinion, I believe that digital storytelling is a technique of transferring narratives to the students using technology whether through the use of images or videos".

"In simple words it is the use of technology to tell stories".

"When the story is told through animation or pictures…".

"It is the use of technology and digital instruments to help deliver the content of stories".

"Telling a story with the use of technological devices".

Question nine: Do you think that digital storytelling is a useful technique to be applied in an EFL classroom?

   a. Yes

   b. No

Table 3.9.

Teachers' views about using DST in an EFL classroom

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	15	100%
No	0	0%
Total	15	100%

The results displayed in the table 3.9 above reveals that all the participants (100%) agreed on the usefulness of digital storytelling in EFL classroom. Thus, considering storytelling as an effective tool in teaching EFL, accompanying it with digital devices facilitates the process. Which suggests that teachers are aware of the importance of implementing innovative techniques in teaching various elements of the foreign language.

Question ten: Whatever your answer, please justify!

Table 3.10.

Teachers Justifications about the Use of DST in an EFL Classroom

Option	Number	Percentage
Answered	14	93%
Not answered	1	7%
Total	15	100%

The participants had provided different justifications concerning the usefulness of digital storytelling in an EFL classroom; some of them stated that:

"In addition to the effectiveness of telling stories, using ICTs make this technique more motivating".

"It may help students learn more about the TC's (target culture) specificities and ways of life".

"Useful for listening comprehension, summarizing and resharing information, vocabulary enrichment, cultural tolerance and empathy…".

"Beneficial for various kinds of students (visual, auditory…)".

"Digital storytelling provides a meaningful context, interesting atmosphere and it is used as a tool to highly motivate students, and it is used to promote other skills such as writing, reading, and listening".

Section two: cross-cultural competence

Question eleven: How do you define culture?

a. How a particular society behave and perceive the world

b. A set of beliefs, values, and attitudes that are traditionally practiced by people

c. Understanding and interacting with other people

d. All

Table 3.11.

Teachers' Definition of Culture

Options	Number	Percentage
A	2	13%
B	5	33%
C	0	0%
D	8	53%
Total	15	100%

According to the collected data, (53%) of the sample selected all the listed options, demonstrating that culture is not limited to one definition. Moreover, culture according to (33%) of the participants is a set of beliefs, values, and attitudes that are traditionally practiced by

people. While, (13%) of them think that culture can be defined as how a particular society behave and perceive the world. Based on these statistics we can conclude that culture is a broad term that cannot be narrowed down to a single definition; i.e., each individual perceives culture differently.

Question twelve: How often do you discuss cultural issues in your classroom?

a. Always

b. Often

c. Sometimes

d. Rarely

e. Never

Table 3.12.

Teachers' Integration of Cultural Issues in the Classroom

Options	Number	Percentage
A	6	40%
B	6	40%
C	3	20%
D	0	0%
E	0	0%
Total	15	100%

The results in the table 3.12 above indicates that (40%) of the respondents refer to cultural issues in their classrooms all the time. A comparable percentage (40%) of teachers discuss aspects related to culture frequently. Finally, (20%) of them from time to time they refer

to culture. Generally speaking, learning a language is learning a culture; in order to use the foreign language in its appropriate context, learners must have a considerable knowledge about the target culture. In conclusion, EFL teachers are aware of the fact that culture is an essential aspect in language teaching and learning. More interestingly, understanding culture allows learners to give the right meaning to each word in its large context, therefore, they will be able to think in the foreign language appropriately and communicate effectively.

Question thirteen: To what extent do you think teaching the culture of the target language is significant?

  a. To a very limited extent

  b. To a limited extent

  c. To a high extent

  d. To a very high extent

Table 3.13.

The Significance of Teaching Culture

Options	Number	Percentage
A	0	0%
B	0	0%
C	7	47%
D	8	53%
Total	15	100%

This question aims at confirming the results revealed from the previous question. Therefore, more than half of the sample (53%) assert that teaching the target culture is

significant to a very high extent. Similarly, (47%) of them think that it is important to a high extent. This explains that the participating teachers believe that it is necessary for learners to be taught about the target culture as it is the bridge that enables EFL learners to be opened to other cultures, which means showing respect and understanding to others.

Question fourteen: What is your aim behind teaching the target culture?

a. To raise learners' awareness of the differences between their own culture and the foreign one

b. To develop learners' cross-cultural communicative competence

c. To help learners understand how others think, live, and perceive the world

Table 3.14.

Teachers' Aims behind Teaching Culture

Options	Number	Percentage
A	0	0%
B	5	33%
C	0	0%
D	8	53%
A+B	2	13%
Total	15	100%

This question examines participants' objectives concerning teaching the target culture. The majority (53%) claimed that all the above-mentioned options are aims behind teaching culture. Further to that, (33%) of the respondents emphasized that teaching the target culture aims at developing learners' cross-cultural communicative competence. This explains that

knowing more about the target culture permits students to understand, communicate, and engage appropriately with individuals from different culture. While, only two instructors (13%) choose both "a" and "b" options, claiming that culture must be taught to raise learners' awareness towards their own culture and the foreign one in addition to developing cross-cultural communicative competence. That is to say, in addition to improving linguistic competence, learners have to be cross-culturally competent.

Question fifteen: According to your background knowledge, how would you define the term "cross-cultural competence"?

Table 3.15.

Teachers Definition of Cross-Cultural Competence

Option	Number	Percentage
Answered	**14**	**93%**
Not answered	**1**	**7%**
Total	**15**	**100%**

The reason behind this question is to examine teachers' knowledge about cross-cultural competence. They provided some definitions which are summarized as follows:

"It is the ability to go through a certain culture, understand it ...".

"The ability to understand people from different cultures and engage with them effectively".

"Possessing the ability to transmit one's culture and understand/ tolerate/ embrace other's culture".

"The ability to understand and cope with the challenges that arise within a cross-cultural communicative setting".

"Cross-cultural competence is to ability to use any foreign language linguistically, pragmatically, and socio-linguistically in the most appropriate manner in order to avoid conflicts and misunderstandings".

Question sixteen: How do you improve your learners' cross-cultural competence?

    a. Through discussing cultural issues

    b. Through providing learners with reading assignments

    c. Through using videos and PowerPoint presentations

    d. Through using online stories

    e. All

Table 3.16.

Teachers' Ways of Improving Learners' CCC

Options	Number	Percentage
A	3	20%
B	0	0%
C	1	7%
D	4	26%
All	2	13%
A+C	3	20%
A+B+C	1	7%
A+C+D	1	7%
Total	15	100%

The table 3.16 above demonstrates that (26%) of the sample rely on online stories to improve their leaners' cross-cultural competence. While (20%) of teachers raise cultural discussions with their learners. Another comparable amount (20%) of them opted for using

videos and PowerPoint presentations as they discuss cultural issues. Furthermore, only two participants think that all the provided ways can be used to improve learners' cross-cultural competence. However, one teacher selected choices "a, b, c". Finally, only one teacher picked the options "a, c, d". Consequently, cross-cultural competence can be developed through many ways. Since online stories is the most used technique, we can conclude that digital devices are more useful and effective for such matter.

Section four: The effect of digital storytelling on learners' cross-cultural competence

Question seventeen: Do you think that the reason behind the students' inability to cross-culturally communicate is because of:

a. Learners are not interested to learn different cultures

b. Being ethnocentric

c. Lack of awareness towards the importance of being cross-culturally competent

Table 3.17.

Barriers to Cross-Cultural Communication

Options	Number	Percentage
A	2	13%
B	0	0%
C	12	80%
B+C	1	7%
Total	15	100%

The table 3.17 above reveals that (80%) of the participants agreed that the lack of awareness towards the importance of being cross-culturally competent is the main reason for learners not to communicate in cross-cultural settings. Furthermore, (13%) of them think that learners are not motivated to know more about other cultures. However, only one teacher (7%) picked the last two options. Consequently, there are various challenges that can be encountered in an EFL classroom; teachers are required to identify them and attempt to solve them, as well as, direct their students' attention to develop cross-cultural communicative skills.

Question eighteen: Are you interested in using digital storytelling to help your students develop their cross-cultural competence?

a. Yes

b. No

Table 3.18.

Teachers' Attitude Towards using DST to Improve CCC

Options	Number	Percentage
A	15	100%
B	0	0%
Total	15	100%

The results displayed in the table 3.18 above show that all respondents (100%) claimed that they are interested in using digital storytelling to help their students enhance their cross-cultural competence. According to the previously collected data, DST is considered an innovative and a practical tool that can facilitate learning as it saves time and effort. Additionally, todays' learners grow up in a digital age, they have tendency towards modern

materials rather than the traditional ones. Moreover, storytelling brings language learning meaningfully vivid and creates an entertaining way of teaching. Therefore, learners are motivated to learn through such technique.

Question nineteen: How would you use digital storytelling to teach cross-cultural content?

Table 3.19.

Teachers Ways of Using DST to Teach Cross-Cultural Content

Option	Number	Percentage
Answered	14	93%
Not answered	1	7%
Total	15	100%

This question was given to investigate the way teachers use this technique to teach cross-culturally related content. The following points are some of their responses:

"By trying as much as possible to incorporate cultural differences, events, proverbs, and idioms in audio/video files".

"Using videos, debates and discussions, presentations".

"I often provide my students with short (sometimes animated) summaries of the plot to literary texts we deal with; I use PowerPoint presentations as well".

"Topics of storytelling already report lifestyle and culture of the communities. They are considered as authentic materials that provide learners with data about the foreign culture; the use of technology would facilitate the task".

"In teaching a foreign language culture, teachers need to use this process of digital storytelling to raise awareness of students, increase their motivation of learning and most importantly reduce time and effort…".

Question twenty: Any other suggestions or comments are most welcomed!

Table 3.20.

Teachers' Comments and Suggestions

Option	Number	Percentage
Answered	10	67%
Not answered	5	33%
Total	15	100%

In this question, participants were asked to provide any further comment or suggestion. (67%) of them had answered the question provided some comments:

"Bad luck!".

"Good luck".

"A good topic, good luck".

"All the best".

"Very interesting topic to be tackled in the department since we have very limited access to the technological tools regarding that teaching a language is teaching a culture".

3.4.4 Summary of the Results of the Teachers' questionnaire

The first section reflects teachers' general information. An important percentage of the teachers have Magister degree. The majority of teachers, also, have more than ten years in teaching English as FL, which indicates that they have a long teaching experience, in addition to their ability to teach various types of modules. This provides reliable results for the present study. Furthermore, the majority of instructors are specialized in linguistics. According to the conclusions drawn from the second section of the questionnaire, the overwhelming majority of teachers insisted on the important role technology plays in today's education. Correspondingly, technological tools enable teachers to develop their teaching methods, and make them more effective and motivating for learners. Additionally, it investigates teachers' attitudes concerning using DST as an innovative teaching technique.

Moreover, in the third section, teachers focused on the importance of teaching culture in EFL classroom. The results confirmed that learners need to be cross-culturally competent in order to use the language in its appropriate cultural context. To conclude, the results obtained from the last part of the questionnaire revealed that most instructors are willing to integrate DST in their classrooms especially for teaching cultural content to help their learners raise an awareness towards the target culture. Consequently, they will enhance their cross-cultural competence. Thus, DST plays significant roles in successful learning in general and in in fostering cultural competence in particular.

3.5 Students' Questionnaire

3.5.1 Description of Students' Questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of twenty-four (24) questions divided into four sections. Each section is constructed according to the points discussed in previous chapters. It includes

closed questions with multiple choices allowing learners to choose what appears appropriate to them, and open questions in which they can justify their answers or provide further explanation.

Section One: General Information (Q1-Q3)

The first section of the questionnaire includes three (3) questions in which learners are requested to state their English learning experience, their level in English, and their aim behind learning it. Hence, the aim of this part is to gather general information about the participants and see if they are suitable for the present investigation or not.

Section Two: Learners Attitudes towards DST (Q4-Q10)

This section attempts to figure out the attitudes of EFL learners towards the use of digital storytelling inside the classroom. It involves six (6) closed questions in which respondents select one or more options, and an open one for further clarifications. The questions (Q4, Q5, Q6) investigates learners' purpose behind telling stories, whether they tell them in the traditional way or relying on technological devices, and to what extent they believe that everyone should develop a digital knowledge. Then, they are asked to describe their digital knowledge (Q7). Moreover, (Q8) is raised to know if their teachers use technological tools while teaching or not. In question (Q9), students are provided with a brief definition of DST in order to figure out whether or not their teachers used it before; and they are required to clarify their choice (Q10).

Section Three: Cross-Cultural Competence (Q11-Q18)

This section is made up of eight (8) questions. In (Q11) students are asked to select among the options provided the relevant definition of culture to them. Next, they are asked whether they think learning the culture of the target language is essential with a brief justification (Q12, Q13). In addition, they are requested to state if cultural issues are discussed within the lesson and in what way their teachers integrate such issues (Q14, Q15). Question (Q16) is about the privileges of learning culture in an EFL classroom. Finally, participants are

asked to select the most convincing definition of cross-cultural competence (Q17), and the efficient way to develop it (Q18).

Section Four: The Effect of Digital Storytelling on EFL Learners' Cross-Cultural Competence (Q19-Q24)

Thereafter, participants are asked if their teachers use the technique of digital storytelling, the modules that can make use of such technique, and about the frequency of using it (Q19, Q20, Q21). In the next question, students are asked to indicate if DST is a good tool to improve their cross-cultural skills or not (Q22, Q23). At last, they are demanded to provide further recommendations or comments.

3.5.2 Administration of Students' Questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered to fifty (50) students on April 18th and 19th, 2023 at the department of English, University of 8 May 1945, Guelma. It was handed to learners while their teacher was in the classroom for fifteen (15) minutes, and it was handed back is the same session. Remarkably, students were excited to answer the questionnaire, and they were also interested in the topic itself.

3.5.3 Data Analysis and Interpretations

Question one: How long have you been studying English?

    a.   11 years

    b.   More than 11 years

Table 3.21.

Students' Years of Learning English

Option	Number	Percentage
A	43	86%
B	7	14%
Total	50	100%

As it is observed in the table 3.21 above, the majority (86%) have been studying English for more than eleven (11) years which confirms that they have developed a good knowledge about English that helps them to use the language effectively in different settings. In addition, using a language for many years helps in bettering cultural understanding about the cultural aspects of the language because learners need to be actively engaged with the target language and its culture. Only few participants have been studying English for eleven (11) years. reveals that the participants have a considerable exposure in learning English as a foreign language as well as learning its culture. Therefore, the sample is suitable to our research and have a clear idea about the topic under investigation to respond the questionnaire questions.

Question two: How would you describe your level in English?

a. Beginner

b. Intermediate

c. Advanced

Table 3.22.

Students' Level in English

Option	Number	Percentage
A	0	0%
B	27	54%

C	23	46%
Total	50	100%

The table above 3.22 indicates that the majority (54%) of students are intermediate in English. While, others (46%) have an advanced level in English. May be, it will enable the researcher to gather valid results according to their answers.

Question three: What is your aim behind learning English?

    a. To develop your linguistic abilities (Grammar, vocabulary …)

    b. To develop your communicative abilities

    c. To develop your cross-cultural knowledge

Table 3.23.

Students' Aim Behind Learning English

Option	Number	Percentage
A	3	6%
B	24	48%
C	11	22%
A+B	2	4%
B+C	3	6%
Total	50	100%

In this question, students are asked to identify their aim behind learning English. the results displayed in the table 3.23 above shows that (48%) of them are learning English to develop communicative abilities which will help them to effectively use the language. Whereas,

improving cross-cultural knowledge is the major purpose for (22%) of the participants. Notably, language and culture are strongly connected and complete each other. Also, the main aim of three of them (6%) is to know how to apply the various grammatical rules of the language and to enrich their vocabulary. Similarly, (6%) of the students chose b and c to be their objectives of learning the language. This suggests that EFL learners focus on mastering the culture in order to communicate effectively in a cross-cultural setting. Finally, only two (4%) students selected a and b.

Section Two: Digital Storytelling

Question four: Why do you think we should tell stories?

   a. For entertainment

   b. To construct knowledge about a given topic

   c. To share our stories and declare our values and beliefs

   d. To know more about other cultures

   e. All of the above

Table 3.24.

Students' Reasons Behind Telling Stories

Option	Number	Percentage
A	3	6%
B	6	12%
C	7	14%
D	5	10%
E	20	40%
C+D	9	18%

Total	**50**	**100%**

The majority of learners (40%) revealed that all the provided options are their aim behind telling stories. Whereas, (18%) of the participants tell stories to transfer their own cultural elements and to know more about other cultures. This indicates that only few learners are aware of the significance of telling stories for the sake of spreading their cultural aspects. Individuals tell stories to transfer and shift culture from one generation to another. Moreover, (14%) of students they tend to tell stories to share their values and beliefs. Additionally, (12%) of learners choose the second option to be their aim of telling a story, they consider telling stories to be a material for constructing knowledge about a given topic. In this sense, stories are an easy way to learn and share knowledge; learners prefer stories to enrich their background knowledge because it simplifies the learning process and makes it more interesting. While (10%) of them stated that discovering and knowing more about other cultures can be accomplished through telling stories. Finally, only (6%) of learners agree on telling stories is just for entertainment.

Question five: Which type of telling a story do you prefer?

    a. Traditional ways

    b. Developed ways through the use of digital tools

Table 3.25.

Types of Telling Stories

Option	Number	Percentage
A	**17**	**34%**
B	**33**	**66%**

Total	**50**	**100%**

The table 3.25 above indicates that most of the participants 66% prefer digital tools to tell stories. Besides, (34%) of the sample tend to rely on traditional ways when telling a story (oral and written ways). Correspondingly, nowadays learners attempt to rely more on technological tools due to its usefulness, and it provides learners with full time access to information as it is easily accessed. Also, it encourages them to be more creative and productive in the educational process. Therefore, these resources offer increased flexibility and this, in turn, makes it easier for students to acquire the language and its culture.

Question six: In the current digital age, to what extent do you think is it important to have knowledge about the use of digital devices?

    a. To a very limited extent

    b. To a limited extent

    c. To a high extent

    d. To a very high extent

Table 3.26.

The Importance of Digital Knowledge

Option	Number	Percentage
A	2	4%
B	10	20%
C	25	50%
D	13	26%
Total	**50**	**100%**

The results demonstrated in the table 3.26 indicates that half of the participants (50%) along with (26%) of them believe that it is highly essential to have digital knowledge i.e., to be able to use digital devices and techniques in their learning process. Thus, the majority of students 76 %are aware of the importance of digital knowledge because digital technology knowledge provides learners with opportunities to learn English from authentic materials. Whereas, (20%) of them along with (4%) of them argued that it is not that important to have knowledge about the use of digital devices because they do not depend on them while learning.

Question seven: How do you describe your digital knowledge?

a. Good

b. Average

c. Advanced

Table 3.27.

Students' Digital Knowledge

Option	Number	Percentage
A	21	42%
B	23	46%
C	6	12%
Total	50	100%

Concerning learners' levels in digital knowledge, most of them (46%) argued that their digital literacy in average. Whereas, (42%) claimed that they are good in using digitals. Finally, only six of them (12%) have an advanced level in using digital tools. That highlights the idea that learners are willing to adopt technology not only for entertainment but also to learn.

Question eight: Does your teacher integrate the use of technological tools in the teaching process?

    a. Yes

    b. b. No

Table 3.28.

The Use of Technological Tools While Teaching

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	38	76%
No	12	32%
Total	50	100%

This question asked students whether or not their teachers integrate technological devices while teaching, and more than a half (76%) said yes, however, (32%) of the participants said no. This denotes teachers at the department of English, use technology to facilitate the teaching and learning processes, and to motivate learners to engage more in those processes.

Question nine: Digital storytelling (DST) is the use of variety of multimedia tools such as videos, images, social media platforms, podcasts, and others to bring narratives to life. Does your teacher make use of these elements?

    a. Yes

    b. No

Table 3.29.

The Use of Digital Storytelling

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	34	68%

No	**16**	**32%**
Total	**50**	**100%**

According to the data shown in the table 3.29 above, (68%) of the sample claimed that their teachers use a variety of multimedia tools such as videos, images, and podcasts when narrating stories that are related to the lesson, or that explains a particular concept or part of the lesson. However, (32%) of them argued that the mentioned elements are not used by their teachers since they rely on traditional ways of presenting lessons i.e., reading lectures and explaining them orally or using the board.

Question ten: if yes, which one did the teacher integrate?

Table 3.30.

Students' Justifications

Options	Number	Percentage
Answered	**17**	**34%**
Not answer	**33**	**66%**
Total	**50**	**100%**

The participants were asked to state which way of the provided options in the previous question do their teachers usually use as a material of DST. Hence, only (34%) of participants have answered the question, and they claimed that their teachers use: videos, images, data shows, audiotapes, and animated videos.

Section Three: Cross-Cultural Competence

Question eleven: According to your knowledge, what is culture?

   a. How a particular society behave and perceive the world.

   b. A set of beliefs, values, and attitudes that are traditionally practiced by people.

c. Understanding and interacting with other people.

d. All of the above.

Table 3.31.

Definitions of Culture

Option	Number	Percentage
A	3	6%
B	26	52%
C	0	0%
D	13	26%
A+B	5	10%
B+C	3	6%
Total	50	100%

The findings collected from the table 3.31 above reports that more than half of the correspondents (52%) define culture as a set of beliefs, values, and attitudes that are traditionally practiced by people. While, (26%) of the participants stated that the definition of culture covers all the aforementioned definitions, which indicates that culture is not limited to particular explanation rather it has many interpretations and each one perceives it differently. In addition, few of them (10%) believe that the provided options 'a and b' are considered the suitable definitions of culture. Whereas, (6%) of them chose the options 'b and c'. Similarly, others (6%) claimed that culture is How a particular society behave and perceive the world.

Question twelve: Do you think learning culture in EFL classroom is important?

a. Yes

b. No

Table 3.32.

The Importance of Learning Culture in EFL Classroom

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	48	96%
No	2	4%
Total	50	100%

It is clearly demonstrated in the table 3.32 above that nearly all the informants (96%) agreed on the significance of learning the culture in an EFL classroom. They stated that language and culture are fundamentally related to each other (verbally mentioned). Conversely, only two (4%) of them did not agree on the importance of integrating cultural elements in the process of learning a FL.

Question thirteen: Justify!

Table 3.33.

Students' Justifications

Options	Number	Percentage
Answered	41	82%
Not answer	9	18%
Total	50	100%

In this question, informants were requested to add justifications concerning the importance of teaching culture in an EFL class, and the majority (82%) have answered. Here are some of their justifications:

"It is very important because it allows us to understand and be aware of other cultures".

"It actually depends on the purpose and the motivation of the learners…".

"So that we can enrich our vocabulary".

"Learning culture in EFL classroom help students learn the language easily and have the ability to communicate effectively".

"In order to know more about natives and the way they behave and communicate with their language…".

The others emphasized the idea that language and culture go hand in hand, and having some cultural knowledge helps learners use the language in its appropriate context.

For those who did not agree on the importance of learning culture in EFL classroom, said that: *"everyone has different purpose from learning a foreign language"*

Question fourteen: Are you exposed to the English culture inside your classroom?

    a. Yes

    b. No

Table 3.34.

Teaching Culture in The Classroom

Option	number	Percentage
Yes	45	90%
No	5	10%
Total	50	100%

After highlighting the importance of learning culture, participants are now asked if there are exposed to the English culture or not. The results reveal that approximately all of them are exposed to the culture of the English language. This indicates that they have developed a knowledge about the target culture, and that they are able to use the language in a suitable cultural context.

Question fifteen: If yes, could you say how is it presented?

    a. Through discussions.

b. Through text reading.

c. Through digital storytelling.

d. All

Table 3.35.

Students Views about Ways of Teaching Culture

Option	Number	Percentage
A	20	40%
B	2	4%
C	15	30%
D	2	4%
A+B	8	16%
A+C	3	6%
Total	50	100%

In an attempt to investigate how the target culture is presented inside the classroom, the table 3.35 above shows that (40%) of the respondents are exposed to the target culture through discussions held in the classroom where everyone is participating and exchanging knowledge. In addition, (30%) of them learn culture with the help of digital storytelling i.e., when the teachers introduce cultural aspects of the FL with the use of animated videos, images, and podcasts, learners would be more motivated to learn about the aspect being explained. Besides, (16%) of the students selected two of the mentioned options which are: discussions and text reading; this suggests that their teachers assign them with reading assignments, so that they would discuss different points in the class. While, only three (6%) claimed that culture is presented to them through discussions and digital storytelling. In this case, the teacher would

provide them with a digital story to watch or listen to, then they would be asked to discuss the cultural elements found in that story. Whereas, two (4%) of the chosen sample opted for the option "b" text reading as the way teachers provide them with cultural elements. Similarly, another two students (4%) chose all the provided options which suggests that their teachers try to use a variety of ways to teach them the culture of the target language based on the needs and objectives of the students.

Question sixteen: Learning the culture of the target language, helps learners

    a. Raise their motivation and awareness towards the target culture

    b. Develop a communicative competence

    c. Develop a cross-cultural competence

    d. All of the above

Table 3.36.

Benefits of Learning Culture

Option	Number	Percentage
A	2	4%
B	9	18%
C	11	22%
D	22	44%
B+C	6	12%
Total	50	100%

Concerning the findings observed in the table 3.36 above, large number of students (44%) stated that learning the target culture can help learners achieve all the mentioned privileges of learning the foreign language culture; owing to the fact that it enables them to communicate effectively and appropriately and it helps them be aware of the differences that

exist between the native and the target culture along with showing understanding and respect towards others. Moreover, (22%) of the participants argued that learning the target culture helps in developing a cross-cultural competence that is being able to interact with others from different culture successfully. Additionally, (18%) of learners believe that the purpose of learning the target culture is improving a communicative competence which means using the language correctly and effectively. Further to that, (12%) of them picked two options "b and c" bearing in mind that both options are somehow similar to each other. Indeed, learning the target culture helps in enhancing students' cross-cultural communicative competence. While, only two students (4%) declared that knowing the culture of the target language raises their motivation to use the language more frequently, and their awareness towards the various aspects of that language.

Question seventeen: In your point of view, what does cross-cultural competence (CCC) mean?

    a. Being aware of the foreign culture

    b. The ability to understand and interact with

        individuals from different culture

    c. Understanding the differences between one's

        own culture and others' culture

    d. All of the above

Table 3.37.

Students Definitions of Cross-Cultural Competence

Option	Number	Percentage
A	**1**	**2%**
B	**20**	**40%**

C	4	8%
D	23	46%
B+C	2	4%
Total	50	100%

This question asks learners to select the definition that is perceived as the most appropriate for cross-cultural competence. Correspondingly, the majority (46%) chose all the mentioned definitions since all of them fulfill the meaning of cross-cultural competence. Furthermore, (40%) of the participants think that the second definition is the most appropriate one for CCC that is the ability to understand and interact with individuals from different culture. Four of the respondents (8%) stated that CCC means understanding the differences between one's own culture and others' culture because this would help them in using the language appropriately. Also, (4%) of them claimed that both "b and c" can be definition for CCC. However, only one student stated that CCC simply means being aware of the foreign culture.

Question eighteen: How do you develop your cross-cultural competence?

    a. Through listening to others stories to learn more about their culture

    b. Through reading articles or books

    c. Through engaging in cross-cultural interactions with other people

    d. All

Table 3.38.

Ways of Enhancing Cross-Cultural Competence

Option	Number	Percentage
A	22	44%
B	8	16%
C	12	22%

D	**2**	**4%**
A+B	**6**	**12%**
Total	**50**	**100%**

In this question, students were requested to indicate the way they use to improve their cross-cultural competence. The results showed that the majority (44%) follow the first method that is listening to others stories because stories attempt to transfer different meanings and messages. Also, stories keep cultures alive, communicate its aspects, and pass it from one generation to another. Additionally, (22%) of the participants stated that engaging in cross-cultural interactions with other people help them to develop their cross-cultural competence. In this sense, interacting with people having different cultural backgrounds help in constructing a good knowledge about the target cultures. Moreover, (16%) of the participants chose the second option to be their way of developing CCC; reading articles and books can be an effective way for them to be cross-culturally competent since books play an important role in preserving the culture and they are considered to be recordings of different cultures. Furthermore, (12%) of the students listen to others stories to know about their culture and at the same time they interact with people from different cultures. Finally, only (4%) of the candidates rely on all the provided options to develop their cross-cultural competence.

Section Four: Relationship Between DST and CCC

Question nineteen: Do you think teachers have to integrate DST in their classes?

    a. Yes

    b. No

Table 3.39.

Integration of Digital Storytelling in The Class

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	36	72%
No	14	28%
Total	50	100%

This question was asked to know whether teachers make use of digital storytelling in their classes or not. The results show that the majority of teachers (72%) integrate digital storytelling in their classes. This explains that teachers are aware of the importance of implementing innovative techniques and methods in the teaching process. Also, teachers are trying to facilitate the learning process and makes it more effective by using a variety of new methods. While (28%) of teachers do not use the technique of digital storytelling.

Question twenty: In your opinion, what are the modules that can make use of DST?

Table 3.40.

Students' Opinions About the Modules That can Make Use of DST

Options	Number	Percentage
Answered	35	70%
Not answered	15	30%
Total	50	100%

Digital storytelling is a technique that cannot be implemented in all the modules; generally only instructors who use technological devices could use it. This question seeks at examining in what modules did learners see such tool, for instance, they specified the hereinafter modules: CFLT, Oral Expression, Literature, Civilization, Reading Expression.

Question twenty-one: How many times teachers rely on DST in their classes including texts from other cultures?

    a. Always

    b. Sometimes

    c. Never

Table 3.41.

The Use of DST in The Classroom

Option	Number	Percentage
A	3	6%
B	43	86%
C	4	8%
Total	50	100%

Based on the collected data, the majority (86%) of teachers rely sometimes on digital storytelling as a teaching material when delivering a content from other cultures. Correspondingly, teachers insist on exposing learners to the target culture using new teaching methods. Teachers try to make learning the target culture more interesting and effective through the integration of different materials. While (8%) of teachers always make use of this new technique to teach the target culture. Only (6%) of teachers never make use of digital storytelling while teaching the target culture.

Question twenty-two: Do you think that digital storytelling can really improve learners' cross-cultural competence?

    a. Yes

b. No

Table 3.42.

Using Digital Storytelling to Enhance Learners' Cross-Cultural Competence

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	48	96%
No	2	4%
Total	50	100%

The results illustrated in the table 3.41 shows that DST can help learners improve their cross-cultural competency due to the fact that it is an innovative material by majority vote. While, only two (4%) do not go along with this idea because teachers did not direct the attention towards using new teaching techniques, this makes learners unaware of the importance of integrating new teaching methods such as digital storytelling.

Question twenty-three: Why?

Table 3.43.

Students' justifications

Options	Number	Percentage
Answered	46	82%
Not answer	4	8%
Total	50	100%

In this question respondents were expected to identify their perspectives about the effectiveness of using DST to improve their cross-cultural competence. Their clarifications revolve around the following points:

"DST facilitates the process of learning culture since nowadays everyone is tending to use digital devices".

"Mainly because stories transfer culture of the foreign language through events and characters, so using technology makes the process easier and attractive".

"It is interesting more that reading articles, it permits individuals to know about other cultures in a modern way'.

Particularly, all of their answers revolve around the same points:

Question twenty-four: If you have any further recommendations or comments, mention them below.

Table 3.44.

Students' Comments on The Effectiveness of Using DST to Enhance Learners' Cross- Cultural Competence

Options	Number	Percentage
Answered	**28**	**46%**
Not answer	**22**	**44%**
Total	**50**	**100%**

This question is an opportunity for the participants to write down any comment or remark about the topic; however, only few answered it either wishing good luck or saying that it is an interesting topic.

3.5.4 Summary of the Results of the Students' Questionnaire

This part of study tries to summarize the results obtained from the students' questionnaire after being analyzed in the previous section of the research.

The findings collected from the first part of the questionnaire (General Information) indicates that the majority of learners have a good background knowledge about the English language and they are acquainted with its culture. Moreover, most of them are good in English. In addition, an important percentage confirmed that developing their communicative abilities and improving their cross-cultural competence is the main aim behind learning English.

The acquired outcomes of the second part (Digital Storytelling), revealed that most of the participants stressed the significance of integrating technological devices in the teaching-learning process, along with the necessity of developing digital literacy that enables learners and teachers to use digital tools effectively. In the same vein, their teachers make use of digital storytelling as an effective teaching technique in different ways such as videos, images, and audios.

The obtained results in the third section imply that learners agreed on the importance of learning the target culture in EFL classrooms. Correspondingly, their teachers are interested in presenting the aspects of the foreign culture through a variety of teaching methods. Finally, learners' answers revealed that cross-cultural competence can be developed through listening to others stories since a story is the core of culture, meaning that cultures are transmitted from one generation to another through storytelling.

Eventually, the results obtained from the last section showed that teachers make use of digital storytelling as a new teaching technique to deliver the target culture content in various forms. Also, most students asserts that their teachers are trying to teach the foreign language in relation to its culture through the use of digital storytelling because culture is a crucial element

in language teaching and learning. Consequently, the majority agreed on the effectiveness of using such technique for developing students' cross-cultural competence.

Conclusion

Considering thoughtfully the importance of digital storytelling to enhance students' cross-cultural competence, two questionnaires were addressed to both students and teachers. Both the teachers and the students confirmed that there is indeed a correlation between the integration of digital storytelling and students' cross-cultural competence. Also, it shows that because of being culturally competent about the English culture, students could learn the language in a better way accompanied with cultural aspects easily. Teachers as well as students were made aware of the necessity of directing students' attention to digital storytelling to be incorporated in classes in order to improve students' cross-cultural competence.

General conclusion

This dissertation aims at investigating teachers and learners' attitudes towards the implementation of digital storytelling in the learning and teaching processes and highlighting the significant role of this new technique. Also, it examines the effectiveness of DST in improving learners' cross-cultural competence.

This research is divided into two sections. The first section contains two theoretical chapters. The first chapter is devoted to discussing digital storytelling, its evolution, definitions, elements, and the process of designing a digital story. In addition, it covers the importance of digital storytelling in education for both teachers and learners. Moreover, cross-cultural competence is the core of the second theoretical chapter. It deals with culture and its relationship with language teaching and learning along with the techniques and approaches of teaching culture. It also discusses cross-cultural competence, and the relationship between digital storytelling and cross-cultural competence.

The second phase of the dissertation contains the analysis of both teachers and student's questionnaire. The findings of the two questionnaires revealed that both teachers and learners have positive attitudes towards using DST in EFL classrooms to develop learners' cross-cultural competence. Therefore, the research hypothesis, which assumes that using digital storytelling in EFL classroom will enhance learners' cross-cultural competence is confirmed.

Consequently, the results of both questionnaires revealed that both teachers and learners agreed on the significance of digital storytelling in enhancing learners' cross-cultural competence. Thus, both participants showed positive attitude towards the use of digital storytelling in EFL classroom because it is a practical and helpful technique for teachers and learners.

1. Pedagogical Implications and recommendations

The aim of this research is to explore teachers and learners' attitudes towards the effectiveness of using DST in enhancing students' cross-cultural competence.

The findings of this research revealed that teachers and students have positive attitudes towards the significance of developing EFL learners' cross-cultural competence. Although teachers recognize that it is important for EFL students to be aware and understand other cultures to communicate effectively with others, teachers are somehow neglecting the importance of using technology-based learning to develop their learners' cross-cultural competence. In this regard, some pedagogical implications and recommendations would be suggested for teachers to integrate DST in their teaching process in order to help in enhancing learners' cross-cultural competence.

- Teachers should focus on teaching the cultural elements of the target language.

- Teachers should motivate their learners to be exposed to target culture to develop cultural awareness and understand cultural differences.

- Students should be aware of the importance of improving cross-cultural competence to realize effective communication and avoid misunderstandings.

- In an EFL classroom, students need to interact with native speakers to develop their cultural competences.

- Generally speaking, integrating digital technology such as videos, images, presentations in order to facilitate the teaching process and motivate students.

- Establishing workshops for both teachers and learners concerning designing a good digital storytelling plays a crucial role to be incorporated in classes.

2. A Proposed Model Lesson

Based on the needs and interests of the sample under investigation, a recommended teaching technique is followed to improve EFL learners' cross-cultural competence which is digital storytelling. This technique helps learners to raise their motivation and engagement inside the classroom; in addition, it helps them develop technology skills in general and language competences in particular. Moreover, it helps teachers to present lessons in a practical and interesting manner.

Digital storytelling, as a proposed technique to improve learners' cross-cultural competence, can be integrated in almost all modules especially those which are related to culture. Particularly, oral expression is the module in which the teacher is not limited by a syllabus and s/he can bring different topics each time, in addition, it is considered as students' opportunity to practice the language, and develop their listening and speaking skills, communication skills, and cultural skills. Furthermore, digital storytelling used different multimedia tools such as images, videos, podcasts, graphics, and animation, which the teacher is able to select the tool s/he thinks is appropriate for his/her learners needs and interests.

Knowing the needs, interests, weaknesses, and objectives of the students is the first step the teacher has to do because it enables him/her to select the appropriate materials, topics, and methods. After collecting data about the learners, the teacher can start plan for the topics that s/he can present using digital storytelling. Another important point is that the teacher has to know how to design a digital story. In addition, the selected topics have to be related in a way or another to culture since the main aim of the teacher is to improve his/her learners' cross-cultural competence. After selecting the topic and the main ideas that will be discussed, the teacher has to create the supporting materials such as creating videos, audios, and images, or s/he can bring already existed materials that serve his/her learners' needs. Also, the teacher should have an idea about how to use digital tools because it will be easier for him/her to design

the story and add the appropriate transition between clips or slides to attract students' attention. Additionally, when the teacher is explaining the lesson, s/he should focus on raising students' awareness towards the importance of being cross-culturally competent and being able to communicate effectively in the target language (See Appendix C).

Furthermore, the teacher can organize workshops in different sessions to show his/her students the process of designing their own digital stories, how to choose topics and the materials. Later on, the teacher can ask them to create their own stories.

To sum up, digital storytelling is an effective way of teaching that help teachers introduce difficult concepts and topics in a practical and adequate manner. Also, it serves as a way to attract learners' attention, and help them develop different skills and competences such as cross-cultural competence.

3. Research Limitations

The present research has a number of obstacles that the researchers encountered during the process. The following points can summarize the main limitations :

- ➢ Luck of authentic sources was the major obstacle while conducting this research. The lack of reliable materials limits the research process.
- ➢ Some primary sources were not available because of their cost.
- ➢ Some students did not provide answers for all questions and they gave incomplete answers for some questions. Also, they did not take it seriously, they just tick options randomly.
- ➢ Some teachers took a long period to provide the feedback, others did not answer the questionnaire.

> ➤ The administered questionnaire was limited only to first year master students. This makes it difficult to generalize the results over other levels, because the students' opinions may differ depending on their learning level.

4. Recommendations

Concerning the results gathered from the current study, further research is recommended about the topic under investigation. Moreover, it would be better if the research was conducted by means of test for learners, and face to face interviews with teachers. in addition, further study is needed to investigate the role of digital storytelling in enhancing learners' cross-cultural competence.

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Appendices

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Appendix A

Teachers' Questionnaire

Using Digital Storytelling to Enhance Learners Cross-Cultural Competence in Learning a Foreign Language

</div>

Dear Teachers

You are kindly invited to go through the following questionnaire, which is part of a research for the accomplishment of Master's degree at the department of English, University of 08 Mai 1945, Guelma. This research aims at examining the role of Digital Storytelling in improving EFL learners' Cross-Cultural Competence. Thus, you are kindly requested to answer the following questions either by ticking the answer perceived as the most appropriate for you or by providing full statements or justifications whenever necessary. Please keep in mind that your answers will be dealt with high confidentiality and anonymity. The data collected will be used for academic purposes only.

Thank you for your valuable time, energy, and cooperation.

Ghaloussi Amina & Dziri Djemil Lina

Second-Year Master Students

Department of Letters and English Language

Faculty of Letters and Languages

2023

Section One: General Information

1. How long have you been teaching English?

    a. Less than 10 years ☐

    b. 10 years ☐

    c. More than 10 years ☐

2. What is your field of specialty?

    a. Literature ☐

    b. Linguistics ☐

    c. Civilization ☐

    d. Translation ☐

3. Which modules are you currently teaching?

    …………………………………………………………………………………………

    …………………………………………………………………………………………

    ………

Section Two: Digital Storytelling

4. Why do you think we should tell stories?

    a. For entertainment purposes ☐

    b. To construct knowledge about a given topic ☐

    c. To share our stories and declare our values and beliefs ☐

    d. To know more about others culture ☐

    e. All

5. Have you ever used the technique of telling stories while teaching?

    a. Yes ☐   b. No ☐

6. If yes, please explain more!

……

……

……

……

……………………

7. Do you use technological tools in the classroom?

   a. Yes   ☐   b. No   ☐

8. In your opinion, what does digital storytelling mean?

……

……

……

……

……………………

9. Do you think that digital storytelling is a useful technique to be applied in an EFL classroom?

   a. Yes   ☐   b. No   ☐

10. Whatever your answer, please justify!

……

……

……

………………

Section Three: Cross-Cultural Competence

11. How do you define culture?

   a. How a particular society behave and perceive the world   ☐

   b. A set of beliefs, values, and attitudes that are traditionally practiced by people ☐

c. Understanding and interacting with other people ☐

d. All ☐

12. How often do you discuss cultural issues in your classroom?

    a. Always ☐

    b. Often ☐

    c. Sometimes ☐

    d. Rarely ☐

    e. Never ☐

13. To what extent do you think teaching the culture of the target language is significant?

    a. To a very limited extent ☐

    b. To a limited extent ☐

    c. To a high extent ☐

    d. To a very high extent ☐

14. What is your aim behind teaching the target culture?

    a. To raise learners' awareness of the differences ☐

       between their own culture and the foreign one.

    b. To develop learners' cross-cultural ☐

       communicative competence.

    c. To help learners understand how others think, live, and perceive the world. ☐

    d. All ☐

15. According to your background knowledge, how would you define the term "cross-cultural competence"?

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………

16. How do you improve your learners' cross-cultural competence?

    a.   Through discussing cultural issues   ☐

    b.   Through providing learners with reading assignments   ☐

    c.   Through using videos and PowerPoint presentations   ☐

    d.   Through using online stories   ☐

    ☐

17. Do you think that the reason behind the students' inability to cross-culturally communicate is because of:

    a.   Learners are not interested to learn different cultures   ☐

    b.   Being ethnocentric   ☐

    c.   Lack of awareness towards the importance of being cross-culturally competent   ☐

Section Four: The Effect of Digital Storytelling on EFL Learners' Cross-Cultural Competence

18. Are you interested in using digital storytelling to help your students develop their cross-cultural competence?

    a. Yes   ☐   b. No   ☐

19. How would you use digital storytelling to teach cross-cultural content?

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20. Any other suggestions or comments are most welcomed!

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Thank you for your time, energy, and cooperation.

Appendix B

Students' Questionnaire

Using Digital Storytelling to Enhance Learners Cross-Cultural Competence in

Learning a Foreign Language

Dear Students,

You are kindly invited to answer the following questionnaire for the accomplishment of Master' degree at the department of English, University of 08 Mai 1945, Guelma. This research aims at examining the role of Digital Storytelling in improving EFL learners' Cross-Cultural Competence. Thus, you are kindly requested to answer the following questions either by ticking the answer perceived as the most appropriate for you or by providing full statements or justifications whenever necessary. Please keep in mind that your answers will be dealt with high confidentiality and anonymity. The data collected will be used for academic purposes only.

Thank you for your valuable time, energy, and cooperation.

Ghaloussi Amina & Dziri Djemil Lina

Second-Year Master Students

Department of Letters and English Language

Faculty of Letters and Languages

University of 08 Mai 1945, Guelma

2023

Section One: General Information

1. How long have you been studying English? (Including this year) ………………. years.

2. How would you describe your level in English?

   a. Beginner ☐

   b. Intermediate ☐

   c. Advanced ☐

3. What is your aim behind learning English?

   a. To develop your linguistic abilities (Grammar, vocabulary …) ☐

   b. To develop your communicative abilities ☐

   c. To develop your cross-cultural knowledge ☐

   d. All ☐

Section Two : Digital Storytelling

4. Why do you think we should tell stories?

   a. For entertainment ☐

   b. To construct knowledge about a given topic ☐

   c. To share our stories and declare our values and beliefs ☐

   d. To know more about other cultures ☐

   e. All of the above ☐

5. Which type of telling a story do you prefer?

   a. Traditional ways ☐

   b. Developed ways through the use of digital tools ☐

6. In the current digital age, to what extent do you think is it important to have knowledge about the use of digital devices?

   a. To a very limited extent ☐

b. To a limited extent ☐

c. To a high extent ☐

d. To a very high extent ☐

7. How do you describe your digital knowledge?

a. Good ☐

b. Average ☐

c. Advanced ☐

8. Does your teacher integrate the use of technological tools in the teaching process?

a. Yes ☐   b. No ☐

9. Digital storytelling (DST) is the use of variety of multimedia tools such as videos, images, social media platforms, podcasts, and others to bring narratives to life. Does your teacher make use of these elements?

a. Yes ☐   b. No ☐

10. If yes, which one did the teacher integrate? ....
....
....

Section Three: Cross-Cultural Competence

11. According to your knowledge, what is culture?

a. How a particular society behave and perceive the world. ☐

b. A set of beliefs, values, and attitudes that are traditionally practiced by people. ☐

c. Understanding and interacting with other people. ☐

d. All of the above. ☐

12. Do you think learning culture in EFL classroom is important?

a. Yes ☐   b. No ☐

13. Justify

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14. Are you exposed to the English culture inside your classroom?

a. Yes ☐   b. No ☐

15. If yes, could you say how is it presented?

a. Through discussions. ☐

b. Through text reading. ☐

c. Through digital storytelling. ☐

d. Other. ☐

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16. Learning the culture of the target language, helps learners

a. Raise their motivation and awareness towards the target culture ☐

b. Develop a communicative competence ☐

c. Develop a cross-cultural competence ☐

d. All of the above ☐

17. In your point of view, what does cross-cultural competence (CCC) mean?

a. Being aware of the foreign culture ☐

b. The ability to understand and interact with ☐

   individuals from different culture

c. Understanding the differences between one's ☐

   own culture and others' culture

☐

d. All of the above

18. How do you develop your cross-cultural competence?

a. Through listening to others stories to learn more about their culture ☐

b. Through reading articles or books ☐

c. Through engaging in cross-cultural interactions with other people ☐

Section Four: Relationship Between DST and CCC

19. Do you think teachers have to integrate DST in their classes?

a. Yes ☐   b. No ☐

20. In your opinion, what are the modules that can make use of DST?

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21. How many times teachers rely on DST in their classes including texts from other cultures?

a. Always ☐

b. Sometimes ☐

c. Never ☐

22. Do you think that digital storytelling can really improve learners' cross-cultural competency?

a. Yes ☐   b. No ☐

23. Why?

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24. If you have any further recommendations or comments, mention them below.

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Thank you for your cooperation.

Appendix C

An Example of Digital Storytelling

ملخص

أدى التعلم الرقمي إلى تحسين تدريس اللغة وتعلمها من خلال إضافة تقنيات جديدة ومبتكرة من شأنها أن تساعد المتعلمين على تعزيز كفاءاتهم اللغوية. في المقابل، تسعى الدراسة الحالية إلى زيادة وعي المعلمين ومتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية بأهمية دمج سرد القصص الرقمي لتعزيز كفاءة الطلاب عبر الثقافات. تم جمع البيانات المطلوبة عن طريق الأسلوب الوصفي الكمي حيث تم إجراء استبيانين لخمسين طالب ماستر في السنة الأولى وخمسة عشر أستاذا في قسم الآداب واللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة 8 ماي 1945 بولاية قالمة. أظهرت النتائج أن كلاً من الأساتذة والمتعلمين يدركون أهمية جعل الطلاب مؤهلين ثقافيًا. علاوة على ذلك، أصر المشاركون على الدور المهم الذي تلعبه التكنولوجيا الرقمية في تعليم الثقافة المستهدفة. وفقًا لذلك، أكدت البيانات التي تم الحصول عليها صحة البحث، مما يعني أن كل من الأساتذة والمتعلمين لديهم موقف إيجابي تجاه استخدام سرد القصص الرقمي لتحسين كفاءة الطلاب عبر الثقافات. وبالتالي، يوصى بضرورة دمج المزيد من الأدوات التكنولوجية في الفصل الدراسي، ورفع وعي المتعلمين بأهمية استخدام سرد القصص الرقمي لتعزيز كفاءتهم في التواصل بين الثقافات.

الكلمات المفتاحية: فصل اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، رواية القصص الرقمية، الكفاءة عبر الثقافات.

Résumé

L'apprentissage numérique a amélioré l'enseignement et l'apprentissage des langues en ajoutant des techniques nouvelles et innovantes qui aideront les apprenants à renforcer leurs compétences linguistiques. En conséquence, la présente étude vise à sensibiliser les enseignants et les apprenants de l'Anglais en tant que langue étrangère ALE à l'importance de l'intégration de la narration numérique pour améliorer la compétence interculturelle des apprenants ALE. Les données nécessaires ont été collectées au moyen d'une méthode descriptive quantitative dans laquelle deux questionnaires ont été administrés à cinquante étudiants de première année de master et à quinze enseignants du département de lettres et de langue anglaise de l'Université du 8 mai 1945, à Guelma. Les résultats ont montré que tant les enseignants que les apprenants sont conscients de l'importance de rendre les étudiants compétents sur le plan interculturel. En outre, les participants ont insisté sur le rôle important que joue la technologie numérique dans l'enseignement de la culture cible. En conséquence, les données obtenues ont confirmé la validité de la recherche, qui implique que les enseignants et les apprenants ont une attitude positive à l'égard de l'utilisation de la narration numérique pour améliorer la compétence interculturelle des étudiants. Ainsi, Il est donc recommandé aux enseignants d'intégrer davantage d'outils technologiques dans la classe et de sensibiliser les apprenants à l'importance de l'utilisation de la narration numérique pour renforcer leur compétence communicative interculturelle.

Mots-clés : Classe ALE, Narration numérique, compétence interculturelle.