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**Using Telecollaboration through Facebook to Develop the English
as a Foreign Language Learners' Intercultural Communicative
Competence
The Case of First Year Master Students at the University of Mohammed
Seddik ben Yahia/Jijel**

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Dedications

This work is dedicated

to my parents;

to my sisters: Selma, Fadila, Souad and Imene;

to my brothers: Mounir, Kamel, Fateh and Nouredine;

to my beloved husband, thank you for your patience and support;

to all my family;

and to all my friends.

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Abstract

The present study aimed at investigating the impact of the integration the use of Facebook on developing learners' intercultural communicative competence. It was hypothesized that if Facebook experience is integrated in foreign language classrooms, learners will better benefit from it in developing their intercultural communicative competence. The integration took place within a telecollaborative project that was designed in collaboration with a Brazilian Professor, Stephan Hughes. 126 first year Master students at the department of English at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia /Jijel and their Brazilian counterparts interacted with each other guided by weekly posted tasks in a Facebook group labelled 'Cross Cultural Critical Thinkers', established for this purpose. The telecollaborative project lasted for more than three months, from mid-January to the end of April 2017, after being piloted in the first semester of the same academic year. The evaluation of the project was both quantitative and qualitative; three research tools were applied and triangulated. The 'Assessment of Intercultural Competence' developed by Fantini and Tirmizi in 2006 was used as a pre-test and a post-test; the participants' observation covered their interaction both in class and online through the use of an observation grid and portfolios; and the focus group discussions were carried out at the end of the project. The results indicated that first year Master students who participated in the project achieved enhancement in the various abilities that constitute intercultural communicative competence, albeit they showed some individual variation. The efficiency of the project was further supported by the findings of the comparative study; the learners who participated in the project outperformed those who did not participate i.e. First year Master students at the University Centre of Mila, despite the fact that they had the same curriculum and syllabuses. The researcher concluded with depicting the limitations of the study and suggestions for further research.

List of Abbreviations

AIC: Assessment of Intercultural Competence

AVUNET: Algerian Virtual University

C1: The Native Culture

C2: The Target Culture

CALL: Computer Assisted Language Learning

CBI: Computer Based Instruction

CC: Communicative Competence

CMC: Computer Mediated Communication

CRP: Communicative Relevance Principle

DZ : Algerian Dinar

DMIS: Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ELF: English as a Lingua Franca

ENS: Ecole Normale Supérieure (Teachers' Training School)

ESP : English for Specific Purposes

EU: European Union

FB: Facebook

FL: Foreign Language

FLE: Foreign Language Education

FLT: Foreign Language Teaching

FLT/L: Foreign Language Teaching /Learning

GPS: Global Positioning System

IATEFL: International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language

IC: Intercultural Competence

ICC: Intercultural Communicative Competence

ICT: Information and Communication Technology

ID: Instructional Design

INCA: Intercultural Competence Assessment

INT: Identity Negotiation Theory

IP: Intercultural Pedagogy

L2: Second Language

M: The Mean

OIE: Online Intercultural Exchange

Q: Question

SD: Standard Deviation

SL: Second Language.

SLA: Second Language Acquisition.

SMALL: Social Media Assisted Language Learning.

SNS: Social Network Sites.

SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences.

TESOL: Teaching English to Students of Other Languages.

TL: Target Language.

3G: Third Generation.

4G: Fourth Generation.

α : Cronbach's Alpha.

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General Introduction

1. Background of the Study

Throughout long years, researchers involved in the teaching profession have been preoccupied and engaged in an endless pursuit and search for a best method that suits all learners. However, no one method could help in achieving such a goal. Rather, it was realised that no method can work everywhere, instead all methods are decontextualised, not completely different, their validity cannot be tested, and they are not purely objective. Therefore, teachers should not limit themselves to assumptions and adhere to a particular method; they should select what works in their class from various methods and follow what they find appropriate and helpful. They should also be aware of the technological, social and contextual development since the teaching/learning classes represent different social contexts that are affected by different technological and social factors (Brown, 2002).

In this sense, some studies tried to demonstrate the importance and utility of introducing new technologies to foreign language classrooms, and to investigate the extent to which both students and teachers profit from them, be it in teaching or testing. However, the use of advanced technologies alone is insufficient because social changes lead to the emergence of new forms of knowledge and new ways of building experience and constructing identity. These social changes have led researchers in the field of language teaching/ learning to anticipate a future shift towards blended learning where learners do not rely solely on schools but they much more rely on online data. Hence, the teachers' role should be modified to connect physically, affectively and pedagogically to this experience. In other words, tertiary learners, being adolescents, may have their most meaningful experiences in the cyberspace where they engage in relationships with others

and construct their identities. Thus, computers are no longer just machines; they are communication devices that facilitate interaction with others from different places and with different cultures. Teachers, therefore, should not ignore this fact in their daily teaching.

2. Statement of the Problem

Being affected by the present social phenomena, Algerian learners in general are attached to the network; they visit different websites to satisfy different needs. However, it has been noticed (from previous research, discussion with these learners and personal observation) that tertiary Algerian students of English are interested in visiting social networks such as Facebook, Twiter, Instagram, and in few cases English learning websites. They show interest in social media interactions either with e-friends speaking the same language (Arabic) or with those speaking other languages. Consequently, most learners spend long hours on social media chat which makes them exposed to new knowledge forms, either linguistic or cultural.

Faced with a variety and large amounts of cultural knowledge, learners may have difficulty to appropriately deal with this new knowledge. Concerning the linguistic knowledge, learners can pay attention to new vocabulary and forms, but cultural knowledge may be hidden and unintelligible. Learners, therefore, cannot recognize and benefit from it in developing cultural awareness and by the same token develop their intercultural competence. This is particularly true for first year master students and who did not have any training in the pragma-cultural use of language. Thus, they may need guidance and assistance to sensitize them and help them be aware of both the cultural and pragmatic aspects to which they are exposed.

3. Aims of the Study

Although intercultural communicative competence has won a wide interest, the majority of research, including contrastive studies (that contrast native speakers' and nonnative speakers' performance in different pragmatic aspects) and speech act strategies (realization strategies used in performing speech acts) has focused on performance and language use. However, little attention has been given to its acquisition and development. Therefore, through bringing the social media (Facebook) experience into class, this study aims at:

- Using online tasks, through telecollaboration, to develop learners' intercultural communicative competence.
- Renewing teachers' vision and work in class to profit from social changes in general and social media experience in particular.
- Raising learners' awareness about the cultural aspects they encounter during their social media (Facebook) experience.
- Encouraging learners to notice the different cultural aspects embedded in the chat.
- Developing learners' intercultural communicative competence inside and outside class.

4. Research Questions

To achieve the aforementioned aims, the present study poses the following questions:

- What are the attitudes of first year Master students towards the use of Facebook for educational purposes?
- To what extent the integration of Facebook experience in education raise learners' awareness related to the cultural component?

- To what extent does the telecollaborative project designed for the present study help learners develop their level of intercultural communicative competence?
- Does the use of Facebook facilitate the teaching process and make it more motivating and effective?
- What are the main benefits and shortcomings that may show up in the Algerian context when integrating Facebook experience within EFL classes?

5. Hypothesis

In the light of the research questions, it is hypothesized that:

If Facebook social experience is integrated and shared in foreign language classrooms, learners will better benefit from it in developing their intercultural communicative competence.

6. Research Tools and Methodology

The learners in this telecollaborative study had an online contact with other distant peers, from Brazil, using English as a lingua franca. The two classes (the Algerian and Brazilian) interacted using the social network site (SNS) Facebook under the guidance of their teachers. The latter designed the project, created the Facebook group 'Cross Cultural Critical Thinkers', launched tasks to be done weekly, and observed the outcome. These online discussions were accompanied with classroom discussion, analysis, reflection, and evaluation.

The telecollaborative project was followed by a comparative study that compares between learners who participated in the project and others who did not, from the University Centre of Mila, and who approximately have the same study conditions. It also compares between the level of frequent and non frequent participants in the project. The

comparative study aimed at finding out the effectiveness of the telecollaborative project, which uses Facebook as the tool of communication in developing learners' intercultural communicative competence (ICC), through comparing learners' levels before and after the project.

A paper and pencil test was administered before and after the instruction for all the participants, except for the Brazilian partners. Because tests are not enough and cannot assess ICC development, learners' observation was the second research tool that was equally employed. This latter means of research stored, analysed and compared learners' contributions to the instruction through the use of an observation grid together with learners' portfolios. 'Focus group discussion' was the third tool used at the end of the instruction and through which learners reflected on the experience and expressed their attitudes towards the use of Facebook as an educational tool.

7. Structure of the Study

The present study is built upon two theoretical chapters that provide the literature review of the concepts that the study revolves, in addition to five chapters that describe, analyse and discuss the results obtained from the implementation of the research tools.

Chapter One, the intercultural communicative competence, is divided into two sections. The first section is devoted to discuss the concept of culture, its types, dimensions, source, and its relation to language and technology. It differentiates between the term intercultural communication and other close terms such as interaccultural and crosscultural communication. Moreover, it discusses the influence of intercultural communication on the construction of identity, how intercultural communication is influenced by some barriers and the importance of intercultural communication. The

second section deals with the concept of intercultural communicative competence (ICC), and an overview of some famous models.

Chapter two, the intercultural pedagogy, is divided into three sections. The first section is tended to cover the definition of intercultural pedagogy, the arguments of its proponents and opponents, its aims, and the place of culture within the teaching methods. It ends with the assessment of ICC and how it could be achieved. The second section spots light on one of the essential computer mediated communication (CMC) activities in Foreign Language Education (FLE), and one of the computer assisted language learning (CALL) key tools available to FL Educators, telecollaboration. Section three puts more focus on one of the most used social network site (SNS) –Facebook, which is the tool selected for the present research.

The research design and methodology chapter (the third chapter) describes the present study showing the operational definition selected for the study, a detailed clarification of the telecollaborative project including: the research design, the rationale, the participants, the tool, population, the procedure, and the significance. Moreover, the three research tools; the questionnaire, the participant observation and the focus groups, used to collect data are presented. It closes with depicting the results of the pilot study.

Chapters four, five and six are devoted to the presentation of the results gained from the participant observation, the questionnaire, and the focus groups respectively. In the light of the data gathered, chapter seven is devoted to the discussions of the results linking the findings of the three tools in an attempt to answer research questions, and to provide implications and recommendations for further research.

Chapter One: Intercultural Communication and Competence

Introduction

This first chapter aims to overview some notions to pave the way for a better understanding of the coming chapters; one cannot talk about intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and its development, unless the concept itself and the concept of intercultural communication are clarified. It is divided into two sections. The first one addresses the concept of intercultural communication, while the second puts focus on the concept of intercultural communicative competence.

Section One: Intercultural Communication

This section is devoted to discuss the concept of culture, its types, dimensions, and its relation to language, communication and technology. It differentiates between the term intercultural communication and other close terms as interacultural and crosscultural communication. Moreover, it discusses the influence of intercultural communication on the construction of identity, how intercultural communication is influenced by some barriers and the importance of intercultural communication.

1.1.1. Definition of Culture

The term 'culture' originates from the Latin word 'cultus' or 'colere' which means growing a crop/ cultivate (Kramsch, 1998; Utley, 2004). Gaining the interest of researchers in various fields (ethnography, anthropology, cultural studies, and language teaching/learning), culture has become "a notoriously difficult term to define" (Barrett; Byram; Làzàr; Mompoin-Gaillard & Philippon 2013 p. 05). It has been viewed and defined differently which resulted in a plethora of definitions.

Samovar, Poter and Stefani (1998) set up a definition that covers the main elements upon which scholars agree, they stated that culture is:

the deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, actions, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spacial relations, concepts of the universe, and artifacts acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving (cited in Xiao, 2010 p.10).

Including all these components, culture has been referred to as a “collective mental programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others” (Hofstede, 2011 p. 03). Moreover, Barrett et.al. (2013) claimed that culture embraces material, social, and subjective aspects.

Material culture consists of physical artifacts [...] (e.g. The tools, goods, foods, clothing, etc.); social culture consists of the social institutions of the group (e.g. language, religion, laws, rules of social conduct, folklore, cultural icons, etc.); and subjective culture consists of the beliefs, norms, collective memories, attitudes, values Barrett et.al. (2013 p. 05).

Material, social, and subjective aspects together form a total set of cultural resources from which individuals use different subsets. Consequently, individuals may belong to multiple subcultures simultaneously, and their participation is context-dependent (Barrett et.al., 2013). Similarly, Shaules (2007) referred to the first and the second type of aspects, i.e. Material and social aspects, as the objective elements of culture which people are aware of, can talk about, and can explain to others. However, values, beliefs, attitudes and norms are viewed as subjective elements that are hidden, people are not aware of, and cannot describe.

Barrett et.al. (2013) further explained that culture has a dynamic nature; it changes over time because of political, economic and historical events, interaction with other cultures, and emergence of novel cultural constructions within its members.

Because of the complexity of the concept and the wealth of definitions provided in different disciplines, this humble work will focus on how culture is perceived from a pedagogical viewpoint. Accordingly, culture is claimed to include three criteria:

- 1/ It is universal and cannot be defined to boundaries.
- 2/ It is dynamic and shaped by the historical experience of society.
- 3/ It is a thinking experience (Borrelli, 1991 p. 284).

Besides, considering various views (behavioural, functionalist, cognitive and symbolic), Atamna (2008) defined culture as:

The specific and general learned knowledge about manners of behaviour, skills, beliefs, values, norms and attitudes which guides individuals and inclines them to function as a group. This knowledge is required for affective communication and interaction among individuals from the same culture. Culture is dynamic, pervasive and constantly changing. It engages an individual member of a particular group or society cognitively, behaviourally, mentally and affectively (Atamna, 2008, p. 20)

Within the same stream of thought, Shaules (2007 p.138) manifested that “culture is the shared products and meanings which act as the interactive frameworks in a given community”. He explained that products can be physical (e.g. food, music), conceptual (e.g. cosmology), or behavioural (e.g. language). All three can be observed and change over time. Meanings, however, refer to how individuals of the same community share ways of perceiving and interpreting products. Meanings have different levels of abstraction

(from explicit to deep), but disagreements between members of the same community are caused by deeper meanings, e.g. how to interpret 'justice' (deep) compared with 'fan' (explicit). Hence, these shared meanings provide solid frameworks for interaction, they make communication possible, but they also cause disagreements within the members of the same community, and intercultural conflicts between individuals belonging to different communities (Shaules, 2007).

1.1.2. Types of Culture

Chastain (1988 p. 303) differentiated between two types of culture: big 'C' culture – or formal culture-, and little 'c' culture –or deep culture-. Tomalin and Stempleski (1993, p06) referred to the former as 'achievement culture' that encompasses history, geography, institutions, literature, art, music and the way of life. However, the latter is referred to as 'behaviour culture' including beliefs and perceptions.

Peterson (2004, p 18) posited the tree analogy through which he likened culture to a tree with some visible and easily noticed elements (e.g. geography, music, food/ branches and leaves), and others that require close scrutiny to be realized (e.g. Beliefs, attitudes/ termites and roots). In addition to the tree model, two other models have been developed; 'The Iceberg Model' and The 'Onion Model'. In the former, behaviour, clothing, and food, for instance, are on the surface of the water, while underlying meanings, beliefs, attitudes and values are below. In the latter, components like behaviour, clothing, and food are represented by the outer layers which can be peeled away to uncover the underlying meanings, beliefs, attitudes and values found in the center (Gibson, 2000).

Furthermore, Peterson (2004) manifested the intersection between 'C' and 'c' culture and visible and invisible culture as shown in the following table:

Table 01

Big 'C' versus small 'c'/invisible versus visible culture

	Big 'C' culture	Little 'c' culture
	Classic or grand themes	Minor or common themes
Invisible culture	Examples:	Examples:
'bottom of the iceberg'	Core values, attitudes or beliefs, society's norms, legal foundations, assumptions, history, cognitive processes	Popular issues, opinions, viewpoints, preferences or tastes, certain knowledge (trivia, facts)
Visible culture	Examples:	Examples:
'tip of the iceberg'	Architecture, geography, classic literature, presidents or political figures, classical music	Gestures, body language, use of space, clothing, style, food, hobbies, music, artwork

Source. Peterson, 2004 p. 25

1.1.3. Dimensions of Culture

A dimension of culture is defined as “an aspect of culture that can be measured relative to other cultures” (Hofstede, 2011 p 07). Many scholars proposed lists of dimensions upon which cultures can be described, analysed and compared. However, before discussing these lists of dimensions, a distinction between cultural domains and cultural dimensions should be made to exhibit better the influence of the deep culture on human behaviour. The former refers to “specific sociopsychological characteristics that are considered to be meaningful outcomes, products, or constituents of culture, including

attitudes, values, beliefs, opinions, norms, customs, and rituals” (Matsumoto & Juang, 2004 cited in Shaules, 2007 p.47). However, the latter refers to “general tendencies that affect behaviour and reflect meaningful aspects of cultural variability” (Shaules, 2007 p.48).

Hall (1976) is well-known for his distinction between cultures based on their way of communication. He divided cultures into high-context and low-context cultures. The former refers to those cultures where little linguistic input is used during communication because much of the information is found within the context. The latter refers to those cultures where nearly everything is expressed linguistically. Hall and Hall (1990) suggested additional conceptual frameworks that include time (past, present, or future-oriented), space, information flow, and interfacing (Hofstede, 2011; Gibson, 2000; Merrouche, 2006).

Other works on dimensionalising cultures include those of the sociologists Parson and Shils (1951), the anthropologists Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961), and Douglas (1973) (cited in Hofstede, 2011). These works were criticized for the fact that

Each of them is strongly colored by the subjective choices of their author(s). They show some overlap, but their lack of clarity about and mixing of levels of analysis (individual-group-culture) are severe methodological weaknesses

(Hofstede, 2011 p. 05)

In his initial work published in 1980, Hofstede identified four dimensions: Individualism vs. collectivism, Uncertainty avoidance, Power distance, Masculinity vs. femininity (Gibson, 2000). These dimensions were proved empirically to correlate with dimensions from other models (cf. Hofstede, 2011). Based on the work of Bond in the

1980s and that of Minkov (2007), a fifth and a sixth dimension were added respectively.

Consequently, Hofstede's recently revised model includes six dimensions:

1. Power Distance, related to the different solutions to the basic problem of human inequality;

2. Uncertainty Avoidance, related to the level of stress in a society in the face of an unknown future;

3. Individualism versus Collectivism, related to the integration of individuals into primary groups;

4. Masculinity versus Femininity, related to the division of emotional roles between women and men;

5. Long Term versus Short Term Orientation, related to the choice of focus for people's efforts: the future or the present and past.

6. Indulgence versus Restraint, related to the gratification versus control of basic human desires related to enjoying life (Hofstede, 2011 p.08)

1.1.4. Culture and Communication

By the 1960s, the ethnography of communication posited that culture, be it a communicative phenomenon, is constituted through talk. Later on, the emergence of "interactional sociolinguistics" put focus on the organization of speech exchanges (Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 2007). Accordingly, Žegarac (2007) in the following quote claimed that cultures are the result of interaction and communication.

Cultural categories should be seen as resulting from interactions between intra-individual, cognitive-psychological mechanisms, such as communication, which enables us to disseminate these representations within and across human populations (Žegarac, 2007 p.39)

Hence, internal interaction within the individual helps in establishing a world view, while communication with others allows for the transmission of knowledge. Then, communication is one form of social interaction that is characterized by integrating the speaker's intention to convey information (communicative intention).

Žegarac (2007) relied on the « theory of relevance » (Sperber & Wilson 1986/1995) to provide an explanation for the emergence of culture. In this theory, a phenomenon is relevant to the individual if when it is processed in context, the cognitive effects realized are large, and the processing efforts are small. In other words, relevant phenomenon is the one that requires little cognitive processing efforts but has great effects. Accordingly, human cognition is claimed to gear for the maximization of relevance. Therefore, Žegarac (2007 p.44) declared that “ the human cognitive system's orientation towards relevance provides one part of the explanation for the emergence and the success of cultural categories” i.e. the more something is relevant to people, the more it is cognitively important, the less processing efforts are required for the mental representation.

The cognitive principle of relevance plays a major role in ostensive inferential communication, and its outcome is known as « communicative principle of relevance » (C.P.R). The latter supports a communicator's production strategy through which goals/preferences are conveyed, and elicit less efforts. It supports equally an addressee's comprehension strategy through which only needed interpretations and expectations are constructed (Žegarac,2007).

The theory of relevance also distinguished between direct and indirect communication through the notion of « communicative strength ». In direct communication, the communicator selects the use of conclusive evidence to express one's intention to communicate particular assumption. In contrast, in indirect communication, this evidence may differ from one culture to another. In other words, what is considered as conclusive evidence in one culture may not be in another. For instance, Japanese may consider silent pauses in their speech a conclusive evidence to express their refusal / rejection for other's propositions in a polite way, but this evidence is not conclusive enough in other cultures like Americans who find difficulty grasping meaning from the communicative situation.

Thus, the communication situation where poor evidence is presented needs extra processing efforts from the side of the addressee (Žegarac, 2007). Presenting a poor evidence in the communication situation together with anything else that may change the real meaning of the message are referred to as « noise » in Jandt's communication model (1995 cited in Gibson, 2000). The latter was used by Gibson (2000) to define culture as a verbal or non-verbal exchange of meaning in which a sender and a receiver of the message or the information are involved. However, the sent and the received messages may differ because of some environmental distortion.

Henceforth, intercultural communication takes place when the context (culture) of the sender and that of the receiver vary. However, this difference may lead in some situations to a complete failure in communication (Gibson, 2000). Being the first to introduce the term 'intercultural communication', Hall (1959) put focus on the deep aspect of culture as the cause behind intercultural misunderstanding since people are not aware of

having different worldviews (cited in Shaules 2007). Similarly, Shaules (2007) argued that

when interacting with people from other cultural communities we are, in effect, interacting with other world views and that surface behavior is tied to deep and hidden networks of meaning, values and expectations that our hosts share with each other, yet which we do not yet fully understand (Shaules 2007, p.34) .

Thus, communicating in a foreign language implies mediation between the individual's and others' cultures (Garcia & Crapotta, 2007). In this sense, foreign language communication is just one type of intercultural communication where interactions between native and non-native speakers using the FL take place. A second type is 'mediated communication' where interactions take place in the presence of an interpreter. The last type is Lingua Franca communication where interactants use a third language which is not their mother tongue.

The third type, lingua franca, caused disagreement among researchers; some argued that the use of Lingua Francas implied the use of simplified forms of languages (e.g. Basic English, with simple grammatical rules and no synonyms or idioms). Consequently, they can be classified as "language of communication" as opposed to "languages of identification" (Hullen, 1992 cited in Meierkord, 2007), and they are culture-free codes and neutral (e.g. world standard spoken English). However, this view has been challenged by other researchers who claimed that lingua francas are not culture-free codes; instead, they argued that the users bring considerable communicative conventions as signs of their appreciation for their original culture that results in the emergence of "a new, in-between, third culture" (Meierkord, 2007 p. 199). Nevertheless, further evidence and research is

needed to prove the existence of such third culture, how it is established, and how it influences the behaviour of the community (Meierkord, 2007).

A close look at the relation between culture and communication would reveal that this relation seems circular. On the one hand, communication fails to reach the success level unless the presence of a coincidence between the actual and the intended meaning i.e. miscommunication may occur if the addressee interprets the message according to a different context. On the other hand, new meanings may occur through communication. In this sense, Novinger (2001 p.14) claimed that « culture governs communication and communication creates, reinforces, and re-creates culture ». However, both culture and communication need language to take place and survive. Therefore, the next part examines the relationship between language and culture.

1.1.5. Culture and Language

The relation between language and culture is complex and multifaceted. Kramsch (1998 p.03) explained it stating that 1/ language expresses cultural reality , 2/ language embodies cultural reality , and 3/ language symbolizes cultural reality . This interconnectedness is manifested in Alptekin's (1993) definition of culture. He claimed that culture involves socially acquired knowledge, or 'schematic knowledge' (Widdowson,1990) and it is developed together with 'systematic knowledge' or the formal properties of language -concurrently by native speakers. Such socially acquired knowledge shape individuals' perceptions and view of the world, hence, it plays a major role in cognition. Buttjes (1990) further explained the strong connection between language and culture arguing that:

- a- Language acquisition does not follow a universal sequence, but differs across cultures

- b- Competent contribution to society is realized through language exchanges in different social situations
- c- The society affects the content, form and function of its children utterances
- d- The most important is not grammatical input, but the transmission of sociocultural knowledge
- e- Native speakers acquire language and associated culture at the same time

(cited in Purba, 2011, p 55).

Similarly, Krech (1962) proposed three main functions for language :

- 1- it is the primary vehicle of communication;
- 2- it reflects, and at the same time shapes individuals' personality and culture;
- 3- it guarantees the transmission and continuity of culture with an effective functioning of the social group (cited in Xiao,2010 p. 09).

In addition to the mutual influence between language and culture, language is a constituent of culture –since language is a mode of human behaviour and culture a patterned behaviour- (Cakir, 2006), and culture is found in all language levels and structures as shown in the following figure.

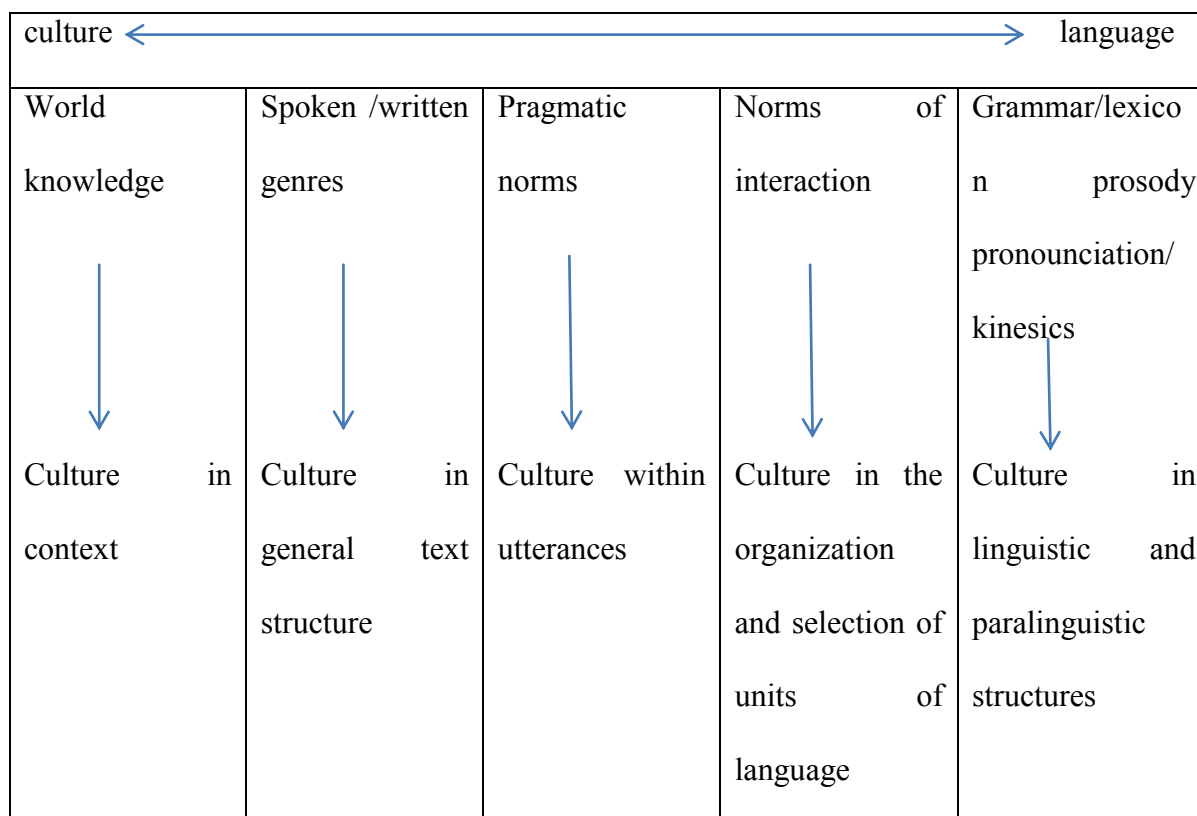


Figure 1. Points of articulation between culture and language. (Liddicoat et al 2003 cited in Ho, 2009 p.64).

In addition to the aforementioned arguments, this strong relation is advanced by Sapir-Whorf hypothesis or Linguistic Relativity, and the concept of communicative genres.

1.1.5.1. Linguistic Relativity

For Sapir (2002), language is a human system of symbols used to communicate ideas, emotions and desire. Language determines and influences thoughts and culture, on one hand, and culture influences people's language, on the other hand (cited in Xiao,2010). Hence, language is no longer referred to as a key to culture, but "it is both a symbol of the whole and a part of the whole which shapes and is in turn shaped by sociocultural actions, beliefs and values" (Byram, 1991 p. 18)

The mutual influence between language and culture is referred to as the theory of 'Linguistic Relativity' or 'Linguistic Determinism' or 'Sapir-Whorf' hypothesis. The strong version of this hypothesis claimed that language determines its speakers' thought, but it was criticized for leading to prejudice and racism; for example, Whorf assumed that Hopis cannot understand modern scientific thought unless they learn English. However, the weak version is accepted for it posited that "language users tend to sort out and distinguish experiences differently according to the semantic categories provided by their respective codes" (Kramsch, 1998 p.14).

Hence, language does not determine thought but influences the way people do think and perceive things. These constructed meanings can be enriched through interaction with users of other languages. Nowadays, research on culture has echoed this view by manifesting that language both embodies and expresses culture (Kramsch, 1998).

Supporting the theory of 'Linguistic Relativity', Nisbett (2003) manifested that "people hold the beliefs they do because of the way they think and they think the way they do because of the nature of the societies they live in" (cited in Shaules, 2007 p.47). In other words, people's beliefs are inseparable from their cognitive processes which are developed through the process of primary socialization. The latter refers to the process through which children acquire their first languages; in doing so, they are not only acquiring the language but also its associate socio-cultural features. They are taught how to behave appropriately in specific situations using language (Buttjes, 1991).

Nisbett (2003) came to this conclusion after an attempt to study the relationship between the cognitive processes and the deep aspects of culture in which he compared between Easterners (Japanese, Chinese and Korean) and Westerners (Europeans and Americans). He found that the former rely more on context and give it a central role in the

analysis of events, while the latter focus more on individual objects. This difference is reflected in other social practices like medicine, law and conflict resolution, debate, science, rhetoric, contacts, human rights and religion. He further argued that this way of viewing reality is passed down from ancient generations. Therefore, he dealt with the deep aspects of culture as being static (Cited in Shaules, 2007).

1.1.5.2. Communicative Genres

Gunthner (2007, p.129) defined communicative genres as “historically and culturally specific conventions and ideals according to which speakers compose talk or texts and recipients interpret it”. In other words, communicative genres are interactive patterns of speech that direct activities in verbal interaction and represent a part of the cultural ideologies at the same time. They function as organizers of our speech, as explained in the following quote:

Speech genres organize our speech in almost the same way as grammatical (syntactical) forms do. We learn to cast our speech in generic forms and, when hearing others' speech, we guess its genres from the very first words; we predict a certain length [...] and a certain compositional structure; we foresee the end ; that is from the very beginning we have a sense of the speech whole, which is only later differentiated during the speech process

(Bakhtin 1979/1986 cited in Gunthner,2007 p.128)

In intercultural communication, participants from different backgrounds carry different repertoires of communicative genres. However, they may also differ within the same geographical or linguistic borders; for example, in Germany, interview genres in the East are different from those in the West (c.f. Gunthner, 2007 pp.136-138). Furthermore,

what primarily seem similar genres can be used differently from one culture to another (e.g. 'letters of request' are differently written by English and Chinese). Thus, knowing how to use these genres is necessary for both establishing interactions, and successful communication.

In intercultural communication, participants stick to their traditional use of communicative genres, but sometimes they use previously acquired knowledge about the other to apply strategies seeking adaptation and compromise, looking for meeting the others' expectations. Consequently, new hybrid forms in intercultural communication emerge which are a mixture of one own convention and those of the intercultural encounter (Gunthner, 2007)

Through the work on communicative genres, genre analysis helped in clarifying and showing the strong relationship between language and culture, on the one hand, and understanding intercultural communication, on the other.

1.1.6. Culture and Technology

Technology and online communication or computer mediated communication (CMC) impact these days the way individuals construct and reconstruct their identities and their social/cultural structures to adapt with others (Shilling, 2005). Some people establish globalization and some programmes within 'cultural imperialism' because individuals undermine their own values and replace them with those presented in the programmes (Hinton, 2007). In this sense, Piller (2007) claimed that Hollywood movies – be they American cultural products- helped in spreading the image of the western men as loving, caring and attractive, the fact that made some Japanese women look for an English speaking partner. However, Hinton (2007) argued that the effect of Media should not be studied in isolation from the cultural context or culture. He argued that some research

results revealed that aggressive behaviour correlates with watching violent films in the USA, but it does not in the Netherlands or Australia. Societies, for him, should follow the example of Japan by focusing on the examination of the society's modern nature rather than on Media. He added that globalization is a process of complex connectivity rather than a mechanism that leads to cultural imperialism.

However, as technology influences the structuring of social relations and patterns of society, culture as well has gained a role at the design level of any internal processor of technological applications. Engineers extract cultural information about the users to develop systems that fit different cultural groups. As an illustration, the use of icons could be interpreted differently from one culture to another, as it could be appropriate or not with reference to culturally diverse populations (e.g. Bottles of champagne to show celebrations are not appropriate in the case of Muslims)(Blanchard, 2011).

1.1.7. Related Terminology

In this subsection, close terms that may cause confusion for the reader are to be clarified and distinguished from intercultural communication.

1.1.7.1. Intercultural vs. Intracultural Communication

Intracultural communication is that type of communication in which participants/interactants share most and central cultural representations. Conversely, in intercultural communication only few cultural representations are shared between the interactants. Henceforth, participants can be close/ distant depending on the number of the shared cultural representations (large/small), and their centrality (high/low). The latter refers to the extent to which that cultural representation “is causally efficacious across many spheres of social life” (Žegarac, 2007 p.41) like religious beliefs.

Furthermore, intracultural and intercultural communication should be differentiated in relation to situations of communication. In a situation of intracultural communication, participants do not face difficulty to reach communicative success while in an intercultural communication, participants need some type of accommodation to reach communicative success.

According to the 'Theory of Relevance', cultural representations facilitate intracultural communication because they are considered to be natural, and taken for granted (little cognitive efforts are required to process them). However, in situations of intercultural communication, they represent the loci of miscommunication i.e. while the existence of mutual cultural environments in a communicative situation means that it is an intra-cultural communication, having different cultural representations leads to the interlocutors' failure to attribute the intended meaning (Žegarac, 2007).

1.1.7.2. Intercultural vs. Cross-Cultural Research

The terms 'intercultural' and 'cross-cultural' are often used interchangeably; although a close analysis would reveal that they are different. Intercultural research refers to the kind of study by which the behaviour of members of two or more cultures is examined during their interaction with each other. Hence, intercultural communication research aims at studying the process of interaction which has a dynamic nature that allows for the construction of different and complex identities. However, cross-cultural research deals with examining the behaviour of members when they interact with others within the same culture, and compare it with the behaviour of others who belong to other cultures (Spencer-Oatey & Kotthoff, 2007).

1.1.8. Intercultural Identity

The term 'intercultural identity' imbeds the mutual and the strong influence that exist between culture, language, and communication and interaction, especially in a modern world characterized by technology and globalization. This section sheds light on this mutual influence together with the role of education and schools in constructing identity.

1.1.8.1. Identity, Language and Interaction

The concept of identity can be divided into two main components, based on the work of the social psychologist Mead (1934), a social component or social identity, and a personal component or personal identity (Spreckels & Kotthoff, 2007). The social identity, called also cultural identity is defined as “ that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from their knowledge of their membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership” (Tajfel, 1982 cited in Spreckels & Kotthoff, 2007 p. 415)

Individuals become members of certain social groups through the process of 'socialization' (Byram, 1997). They understand their relations with the surrounding world, and how these relations change over time and space (Norton, 2000); and they keep continuously negotiating their beliefs, behaviours and meanings for a better understanding of the future (Byram,1997). Hence, sociocultural approaches view social / cultural identity as dynamic and continuously changing since individuals are constantly getting involved in new experiences and relations which affect their view of the self and how they relate to others (Ricento, 2005). Then, « without the 'they' no 'we' can exist » (Spreckels & Kotthoff, 2007 p.419). That is to say, by being part of communities of practice, members

engage in action verbally and/or non-verbally through which they negotiate their identities and transform them through a series of changes (Wenger,1998 cited in Ryan,2009).

Norton (1997) explained further the notion of cultural identity stating that it is

- complex, contradictory and multifaceted;
- identity is seen as dynamic across time and place ;
- identity constructs and is constructed by language ;
- the construction of identity must be understood with respect to larger social processes, marked by coercive or collaborative relations of power.

(cited in Leung and Lee, 2006 p.29)

Norton (1997) did not only manifest the complex and the dynamic nature of cultural identity, but also emphasized the strong mutual influence of identity and language. Thus, “an investment in the target language is also an investment in a learner’s own identity” (Norton, 2000 p.11). In other words, the study of the target language should be linked to the speakers and their social relationships, because learner’s identity both influence his motivation to learn the target language (TL) and is influenced by the TL cultural context. Consequently, interactants bring their identities to the communicative process, and negotiate them through interaction using language.

Introducing a learning theory based on social engagement, Wenger (1998 cited in Ryan, 2009 .p56) claimed that “developing a practice requires the formation of a community whose members can engage with one another and thus acknowledge each other as participants. As a consequence, practice entails the negotiation of ways of being”. Therefore, mutual interaction with other members of the community would help participants bring changes in their identities.

1.1.8.2. Identity in a Globalized World

As opposed to the old generations whose identity construction is related to the direct context in which they were born, nowadays, individuals have increasing possibilities and choices that, if deeply considered, would make them highly insecure and cause identity crisis and inconsistency (Spreckels & Kotthoff, 2007). In the same vein, Giddens (1991 cited in Spreckels and Kotthoff, 2007 p.417) shed light on one negative side of modernity stating that “modernity confronts the individual with a complex diversity of choices and [...] at the same time offers little help as to which options should be selected”. The reason behind this identity inconsistency is the so-called the «Dissolution of guarantees of coherency» (Spreckels & Kotthoff, 2007 p.417) represented in the family, the nation, religion, etc. which have been losing throughout time stability and their functioning as reference.

Empirical research showed that youth are less and less identifying themselves with particular identities, a situation that is described differently by various researchers referring to it as ‘market place of identities’ (Eckert, 2000), ‘surfing between various experiential worlds’ (Baacke,1987), and ‘patch work identities’(Elkind, 1990). The main characteristic of such identity is that it is formulated out of different identities which cannot be unified into an integrated unit, although individuals possessing such kind of identity are successful in everyday life (Spreckels & Kotthoff, 2007).

In spite the fact that modern identities are proved to be patchwork constructions due to globalization and the highly developed communication means, these identities need stability, coherence with their respective cultures to gain assertion and security (Spreckels & Kotthoff, 2007). In this sense, the concept of ‘positioning’ is introduced and defined as “the discursive process whereby selves are located in conversations as observably and

subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced storyline” (Davies and Harré,1990 cited in Spreckels & Kotthoff, 2007 p. 425). Thus, identities are resources that help interactants position themselves in a discourse.

Therefore, Finkbeiner (2009) introduced the ‘Human GPS analogy’. She transferred the concept of GPS (global positioning system), which allows for locating unknown regions, to ‘Human GPS’ and explained how this latter is related to culture and to perceptions of the self and the other.

Firstly, the human GPS is similar to GPS since individuals need to navigate and negotiate perceptions about the self and the other. When developing their human GPS, they will be able to see the hidden dimensions of culture, and to clarify misunderstanding. Finkbeiner (2009) explained that “what we need to learn is how to be more precise and more successful in orienting and locating ourselves in a network of possible places, premises and sites” (p.153). In other words, negotiation of perceptions helps in locating oneself. This claim goes hand in hand with the ‘identity negotiation theory’ (INT) (Tiny-Toomey,1999 cited in Ryan,2009) that adapted Langer’s concept of ‘mindfulness’ i.e. one has to rethink and invest the knowledge he has about his culture and the other world, in addition to motivational and everyday interaction skills.

Secondly, both the technical and the human GPS need the fulfillment of some pre-conditions. To function successfully, a GPS needs to:

- 1- receive and process information from at least three satellites in different positions
- 2- fed into with essential navigation data
- 3- be powered
- 4- be switched on
- 5- the user follows the application rules.

Similarly, for a 'human GPS' to function and help individuals position themselves culturally, they need to:

- 1- Receive and process information from at least two different perspectives, because “ the understanding of the multi-perspective anchoring of culture, language and people enables us to locate ourselves more intelligently and others culturally and socially” (Finkbeiner, 2009 p.157)
- 2- Have the 'navigation data'. Through the processing of this data, which represents a new knowledge that conflicts with prior one, a new third perspective is created, and the self then resides in the core.
- 3- Be continuously 'powered' through authentic linguistic and cultural learning environment.
- 4- Be aware of cultural similarities and differences, and be sure that their switches are always 'on'.
- 5- Follow certain application rules which represent the cultural rules that govern the success of intercultural communication.

The importance of the human GPS lies in the fact that it allows us to locate ourselves within an increasing diverse world, protect ourselves and establish intercultural identities. The latter were defined by Kim (2001) as “the ability to grow beyond one's original culture and encompass a new one while one gains insight into both cultures in the process” (cited in Ryan, 2009 p.54). However, Finkbeiner (2009) argued that the human GPS cannot start the navigation unless 'the self' is first located, because we cannot understand others unless we understand ourselves first.

Then, the development of intercultural / international identity may challenge the concept of national identity but cannot replace it (Byram, 2008). This idea echoed Kramsch's concept of 'the third place' or 'the third space'. Feng (2009 p.88) posited that

'the third place' is "an intermediate zone where mediated ways of behaving and modes of thinking are identified and individual identities are negotiated and transformed, usually partially". In other words, it is a space where intercultural interaction takes place, and by means of which change emerges.

1.1.8.3. Schools, Culture and Identity

Schools are institutions that play a major role in individuals' acquisition of the language, as well as the transmission of culture and the construction of identities. They are "politically mandated to transmit the basic elements of citizenship and national identity, in order to ensure the continuity and endurance of the political community" (Scherr, 2007 p.303). This takes place through providing historical and political information of themselves as citizens, and making them aware of their duties towards their nation. Hence, schools represent spaces where learners acquire much of their cultural background, and practice it while interacting with others (learners and / or teachers).

In an attempt to manifest the relation between language / linguistic identity and national identity, Leung and Lee (2006) with others examined the case of different countries (such as HongKong, Singapore, China, Japan, Poland, Britain, U.S.A, Germany) where the recent main focus has been the development of an educational system or curricular that would allow for the development of knowledge, practice skills and value/attitudes/ understanding. For these nations, individuals' morals and sense of community-involvement can be fostered through education to preserve the national identity and cope with the diverse world around. Within this vein, Byram (1997) gave examples of educational systems that aim at raising learners' cultural awareness without threatening their own national identity, but instead strive to reinforce it (e.g. the European union, The Arab Gulf states, Canada) through providing learners with knowledge related to their

mother culture/national culture together with techniques and methods of analysing other cultures.

1.1.9. Barriers to Intercultural Communication

Not all situations of intercultural communication result in mutual understanding; miscommunication and conflicts are common. Gibson (2000) listed five main barriers to intercultural communication: attitudes, perception, stereotypes, interpretation, and culture shock.

1.1.9.1. Attitudes

For social psychologists, interactants' way of behaving in an intercultural situation, and the way they perceive it are directly driven by their attitudes and motivation, "psychological work in intercultural communication has always been based on the assumption that the attitudes, interactional goals, and motives of interlocutors determine their choice of language and non-verbal behaviour[...] as well as their evaluation of it" (Brabant, Watson and Gallois, 2007 p.56).

This salient role that attitudes and motivation play in hindering or facilitating intercultural communication, be they negative or positive respectively, was taken under scrutiny by Matsomoto, Yoo and LeRoux (2007) who posited a unique model in which they suggested that intercultural communication effectiveness does not rely only on cognitive aspects, but needs also emotion regulation. They added that "how well people deal with their negative emotions and resolve conflicts is a major determinant of intercultural adjustment success or failure" (p. 81). By emotion regulation, these authors referred to negative emotions as a driving force that motivates people to react and be engaged in culture conflicts. This view is based on Piaget's theory of cognitive

development focusing on the process of assimilation and adaptation, and in which negative affect (children's failure to assimilate the environment) fuels cognitive development and leads to adaptation. Moreover, they suggested that individuals can regulate their emotions through holding them and avoiding direct reaction, which gives them space and time for critical thinking. The latter allows for the recognition of hidden and real causes of the situation besides openness and flexibility to similarities and differences that exist between cultures.

Henceforth, Matsomoto, Yoo and LeRoux (2007) posited four main ingredients for successful intercultural interaction: emotion regulation (E.R), critical thinking (CT), openness (OP), and flexibility (FL), which together form the so-called « the psychological engine » of adaptation and adjustment. Thus, if intercultural communication success is aimed at, the consideration and inclusion of emotion regulation is of salient importance.

1.1.9.2. Perceptions

Gudykunst and Kim (1992) distinguished two types of intercultural interaction contexts. The external context; it includes both the location of the interaction, and the societal attached meanings. The internal context; it refers to the way interactants perceive the situation and the meanings depending on the culture to which they belong(cited in Byram and Feng, 2005).

Intercultural misunderstanding occurs because of the difference in the interactants' internal context; variation in the perception of the communicative situation causes misunderstanding. This idea can be more illustrated through the example of open versus closed doors. Most Germans keep the doors of the room or office closed as a sign of order and human respect. Reversely, Americans keep their doors open as a sign of friendliness. Hence, such variation in perception causes misunderstanding, for Americans tend to

perceive the German act of closing doors as a sign of unfriendliness, while Germans perceive Americans' act of opening doors a sign of disorder and disrespect (Kramersch,1993).

1.1.9.3. Stereotype and Prejudice

The concept stereotype used to be employed interchangeably with prejudice, at the beginning, but lately researchers recognised them as different (Kaouache, 2008). Accordingly, Gibson (2000) defined a stereotype as

A fixed idea or image that many people have of a particular type of person or thing, but which is not true in reality. The word comes from printing, where it was used to describe the printing plate used to produce the same image over and over again

(Gibson, 2000 p. 12)

Shaules (2007), in his turn, claimed prejudice to function

primarily out of conscious awareness and often result from judging behaviour based on criteria that the sojourner assumes is neutral and absolute, but which is actually based in hidden cultural assumptions .

(Shaules , 2007 p.66)

The examination of the definition of the two concepts implies that prejudice is the unfavourable attitude that one group of people direct towards another group, not individual, due to the negative picture they had about them, and which was formed out of incorrect information. The source of this information is the surrounding environment; the culture to which the person belongs, the parents, and/ or peers (Kaouache, 2008).

The unfavourable attitude 'prejudice' stems from "the cognitive beliefs that people hold towards the characteristics of other groups" (Kaouache, 2008 p. 95) or stereotypes. Stereotyping persons tend to describe all the members of a group similarly; the observed characteristics of an individual are used to describe the whole community. Thus, stereotypes are the result of over-generalization, as they could be passed down from one generation to another.

To overcome falling in prejudice and negative judgments, individuals should be aware of the differences between the two cultures especially the hidden aspects. Besides, in intercultural communication, individuals can avoid making stereotypes by distinguishing between what is cultural and what is personal to interpret the situation (Gibson, 2000). This idea is further illustrated by Hostfedé's (1991) pyramid for the 'three levels of uniqueness in human mental programming'. In this model every person likens all other people in same characteristics (eating, sleeping...), differs in some (determined by the culture one belongs to), or/ and totally differs in some others (particular to the individual) (cited in Gibson, 2000).

1.1.9.4. Interpretation

In 'intercultural sociolinguistics', the notion of '*speech activity*' refers to "mental models or schemata of goal-oriented actions" (Gumperz and Cook-Gumperz, 2007 p.16) through which participants could interpret, judge, expect and infer information from the context, and relate it to their previous knowledge. Hence, interactants use their previously acquired knowledge to appropriately interpret the situation. Accordingly, besides the ability to deal with grammar and semantics, "interpretations [...] rely on perceptions of extra-linguistic context, knowledge of the world, as well as the cultural presuppositions that are brought to the interaction" (Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 2007 p.17).

Therefore, the interpretation of the communicative situation is influenced by previous knowledge / indexical knowledge which is developed through interactive experience in a cultural environment, and influence the interactants' future responses. However, when participants do not share background knowledge / indexical knowledge, interpretations may differ and lead to misunderstandings. The addressee may fail to interpret the message / the informative evidence because of the absence of a shared knowledge, in this case, either the evidence is not recognized, or the interlocutors' belief / assumptions contradict (Žegarac, 2007). This is better clarified through the following example:

A Japanese businessman is negotiating with a Norwegian partner. The Japanese says that the deal will be very difficult. The Norwegian asks how her company can help to solve the problems. The Japanese is puzzled by the question (Adler 1997 cited in Gibson, 2000 p.14)

The situation above is an example of intercultural misinterpretation. The Japanese meant that there was no deal, indirectly to be polite, but the Norwegian could not recognize the informative evidence, rather she interpreted the situation depending on her native culture assumptions.

In addition to previously acquired knowledge, interactants can rely on conversational inference. The latter is a process of interpretation in which participants rely on an exchange with other interlocutors to assess the intended meaning, and on which they base their response.

1.1.9.5. Culture Shock

Oberg (1960) defined culture shock stating that it “is precipitated by the anxiety that results from losing all our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse” (cited in

Gibson, 2000 p.15). That is to say, culture shock is a feeling of anxiety and astonishment that is experienced by those detached from their native culture. Culture shock most of the time occurs when sojourners feel under pressures to make a lot of adjustments, but also can take place in a foreign language classroom (Merrouche, 2008).

Gibson (2000) described different phases of culture shock; in the first phase, 'honey moon', individuals enjoy their presence and contact with the new culture, as the name suggests. However, this satisfaction is followed by a period of frustration and anxiety when these individuals recognize that they have to make adjustments to cope with the new environment. The following period is characterized by periods of recovery and culture shock until a sense of familiarity with the new culture is established.

1.1.10. The Importance of Intercultural Communication

The emergence of the field of intercultural communication is traced back to the end of the Second World War, as explained in the following quote:

The field of intercultural communication grew out the practical, competitive needs of post-second world war American International Diplomacy and Business, and was only later applied to interethnic conflicts within the United States [...]. By contrast, the field of intercultural communication in Europe was a direct outcome of the social and political upheals created by the large scale of immigrants into the industrialized countries

(Kramsch, 2001 p.202)

Although the reasons behind the emergence of the field of intercultural communication in Europe and America seem to be different, it can be said that the

industrial development and the extension of the business exchange scale were behind its emergence, as well as, its gained importance.

Gibson (2000 p.03) argued that the importance which intercultural communication has gained is due to the following reasons:

- Technology makes it possible for people to travel further and faster than ever before.
- The Internet links people across national boundaries.
- The international labour force is more mobile.
- More people are on the move than ever before: business people are active globally, refugees are trying to escape from conflicts and natural disasters.
- In many places the workforce is becoming more diverse.

Nowadays with globalization, technology, masses movements, and the wide online communication, there is no existence of the old notion of borders i.e. even if individuals never travel abroad, international influences come home, then, skills of intercultural communication are needed to find out direction and identity (Kramsch, 2001).

Section Two: Intercultural Communicative Competence

The increasing importance that intercultural communication has gained attracted the attention of researchers who focused on the study of the concept of intercultural communicative competence. This second section deals with this concept in an attempt to clarify it through defining it, distinguishing it from other close concepts, and providing an overview of some well-known models.

1.2.1 Definition of Intercultural Communicative Competence

The term 'competence' was first borrowed from vocational education/training in which focus was on skills and behaviours. Once transposed into school and professional education, the concept's meaning has been broadened to include "a combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and behaviours" (Guilherme, Glaser and Garcia, 2009 p.194).

Be it a kind of competence that modern education aims to develop in learners, ICC has been the subject of interests of different researchers in different fields like social psychology (c.f. Brabant, Watson and Gallois, 2007) management science (c.f. Precht and Lund, 2007), and foreign language education. Within the latter, ICC refers to the learners' ability to share their culture with others, and to look at it from an external perspective (Ho, 2009), from one hand, and to acquire "information or mediation skills, allowing for an insider's view of the foreign culture and encouraging the negotiation of meaning across cultures" (Buttjes, 1991 p. 09). These abilities imply that intercultural learners should gain insights into both the native and the target cultures (Ho, 2009). Consequently, they will be able to act appropriately when confronted with differing others, gain self-confidence and security, and help others through skills of mediation (Meyer, 1991).

The council of Europe identified the following list of subsequent abilities that compose ICC:

- The ability to relate the native and the foreign culture.
- The ability to interact with people from different cultures based on 'cultural sensitivity'
- The ability to mediate between cultures and solve conflicts.
- The ability to overcome stereotypes (Prechtel and Lund, 2007 p 469)

However, Byram (1997) proposed five savoirs :

- 1- Savoir : knowledge of self and the other, and interaction.
- 2- Savoir comprendre : skills of interpreting and relating.
- 3- Savoir s'engager : skills of critical cultural awareness.
- 4- Savoir apprendre/faire : skills to discover and/or interact.
- 5- Savoir être : attitudes ; relativising self and valuing others.

(Byram, 1997 p.34)

Together with the following subsequent competences:

- Linguistic competence: knowledge of rules that allow for the production and interpretation of both spoken and written language.
- Sociolinguistic competence: the ability to grasp the meaning from the interlocutors' utterances taking into account different social constraints.
- Discourse competence: the ability to use strategies to produce and interpret spoken and written language (Byram 1997 p. 48).

Byram (1997) further claimed that not only verbal communication should be given importance, but non-verbal communication also should be considered since it is a crucial element of interaction. Byram (2006) revised this description and claimed that to be

interculturally competent, EFL learners have to display a number of affective, behavioural and cognitive capacities. First, attitudes/ affective capacities embed acknowledgement of the identities of others, respect of otherness, tolerance for ambiguity, and empathy. Second, behavioural capacities include flexibility and communicative awareness. Third, cognitive capacities refer to knowledge, knowledge discovery, interpreting and relating, and critical cultural awareness.

All in all, it is of paramount importance to state that developing ICC does not imply abandoning one's cultural affiliation and adopting others, but, it allows for a better understanding of the self and others. For further clarification and identification of the concept, a comparison will be made with close concepts like communicative competence (CC), intercultural competence (IC) and sociolinguistic/ pragmatic competence.

1.2.2. Related Terminology

The use of some terms which are close in meaning to the concept of ICC (such as the communicative competence, the pragmatic competence and the intercultural competence) decreases its clarity. Therefore, delineating confines between these concepts and ICC is of crucial significance.

1.2.2.1. Communicative Competence

The notion of 'communicative competence' is traced back to the work of Hymes (1972) who coined the term to assert that the acquisition of Chomsky's 'linguistic competence' is not enough if communicating effectively is to be aimed at. Hymes (1972) argued that in addition to the linguistic competence, which he referred to as what is 'formally possible'; learners should acquire the ability to produce utterances that

are appropriate in regard to the context they are used in, feasible, and probable or commonly/ actually used.

The concept of communicative competence found a further theoretical support in Halliday's linguistic theory of communication (1970). He posited that the field of linguistics is concerned "with the description of speech acts or texts, since only through the study of language in use are all the functions of language, and therefore, all components of meaning brought into focus" (p.145). Moreover, Canale and Swain (1980) expanded this notion to include:

- The grammatical competence or linguistic competence ; the ability to use language grammatical and lexical rules accurately.
- Sociolinguistic competence; the ability to understand and produce language appropriately regarding the social context in which communication takes place.
- Discourse competence; the ability to produce utterances which are related / coherent to the entire discourse.
- Strategic competence; the ability to select and use strategies that would help in initiating and maintaining communication.

However, these theoretical frameworks and claims are not reflected in language teaching / learning practices. In other words, these practices are guided by the principles of the communicative approach, summarized by Richards and Rodgers (2001) as:

- Learners learn a language through using it to communicate.
- Authentic and meaningful communication should be the goal of classroom activities.
- Fluency is an important dimension of communication.
- Communication involves the integration of different language skills.
- Learning is a process of creative construction and involves trial and error.

A close examination of these principles reveals that more importance is given to communication through developing fluency and accuracy, while culture is marginalized. Albeit the communicative approach is supposed to help learners develop the sociolinguistic competence, teaching culture does not reflect real life, it is rather information-oriented (Byram et.al.,1991). And although the use of 'Authentic Materials' in class is stressed to introduce learners to the language social role, focus was directed to learners' fluency and accuracy with limited concern in language use in regard to the foreign culture and society (Byram, 1991). In other words, culture was not considered a dynamic skill or competency for handling successfully interaction.

Within the same stream of thought, Garcia and Crapotta (2007, p.63) held that the communicative approach was criticized for focusing on the sociolinguistic rather than the sociocultural dimension. The ignorance of the sociocultural dimension implies universality in using and interpreting speech functions which is not the case because what is applied in one culture is not necessarily applied in others, albeit some aspects are transferrable (O'Dowd, 2013; Neddar,2011). This approach resulted in preparing learners to be tourists in the foreign country instead of successful FL users. Besides, it neglected finding out about others' points of view, since learners are directed to think that all interlocutors understand and interpret language the same way (O'Dowd, 2013).

Hence, in the 1990s, the notion of communicative competence has been expanded to assert the interconnectedness between language and culture, and interest in C.C diminished for the ICC. The latter was defined to be "the ability to interact in complex cultural contexts among people who embody more than one cultural identity and language" (Clouet, 2006 p.55). The intercultural speaker as a mediator has become the emphasis and the aim of education.

1.2.2.2. Intercultural Competence

Although the two terms are sometimes used interchangeably, Byram (1997) distinguished between intercultural competence and intercultural communicative competence. Intercultural competence refers to the individuals' ability to interact with others overcoming cultural differences, but using their own language. In other words, Knowledge of otherness and skills of interpreting and relating in such situation can be gained from different experiences –be they personal or through instruction- but the mastery of a foreign language is not required. However, intercultural communicative competence refers to the individuals' ability to interact appropriately with people from different origins using a foreign language. Hence, in contrast with I.C, ICC allows for dealing with a wider range of situations as a result of using a foreign language (Byram, 1997).

1.2.2.3. Pragmatic Competence

The field of pragmatics deals with “the study of how more gets communicated than is said” (Yule,1996 p.03), and how individuals act – do things- and interact with each other using language (Kasper & Roever, 2005). Accordingly, the pragmatic competence is broadly defined as “the ability to use language appropriately in a social context” (Taguchi,2009 p.01).

More particularly, however, the development of pragmatic competence requires “an increasing ability to understand and produce sociopragmatic meanings with pragmalinguistic conventions” (Kasper and Reover, 2005 p318). In other words, the pragmatic competence entails two associated intersecting domains : pragmalinguistic competence and sociopragmatic competence. The former refers to the linguistic resources, forms and means (e.g. speech act strategies) used to perform particular pragmatic

functions, while the latter refers to “the social conditions and consequences of “what you do, when and to whom” (Kasper and Reover, 2005 p.317) which regulate the appropriateness of these linguistic resources, forms and means in relation to one culture context or another (Taguchi, 2009).

For Thompson (1997), pragmatic competence requires to speak and behave appropriately besides understanding others' language, and interpreting their behaviour. Although Thompson (1997) used the pragmatic competence and communicative competence interchangeably, Hymes (1972) claimed that pragmatic knowledge is a component of communicative competence. Similarly, comparing the pragmatic competence to ICC, taking into consideration the previous definitions -mainly that of Byram (1997-2006), it can be said that the pragmatic competence is a component or a subpart of ICC in addition to the five *savoirs* or the different affective, behavioural and cognitive capacities. In this sense, Kramsch (1993) stated that:

an educational philosophy that stresses only doing things with words runs the risk of helping maintain the social status quo[...]. Cross-cultural competence is predicted on paradox and conflict and on often irreducible ways of viewing the world. Kramsch (1993, p.240)

In other words, the development of ICC required a wider range of skills and capacities at which education should aim. She further argued that : “pragmatically-oriented educational culture [...] measures the effectiveness of language learning against the ability of learners to participate in socially appropriate verbal exchanges with others” (Kramsch, 1993 p.183). That is to say , pragmatically-oriented approach seeks an appropriate communication with others. Conversely, intercultural education aims at enabling learners to understand others' attitudes and to understand one's self through others.

1.2.2.4. Intercultural and Bicultural Speakers

Because being bicultural takes place in naturalistic settings, individuals are able to understand the meanings, practices, beliefs, expectations... of both cultures i.e. they are part of both cultures. This process underlies degrees or levels of transformation that range between normal second socialization, in one extreme, and 're-socialization' or 'alternation', in the other (Byram, 2008 p. 59).

However, being intercultural does not imply an identity transformation ; it rather involves the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for successful interaction and mediation between cultures. Such characteristic of acting as mediator is what distinguishes 'intercultural' from 'bicultural' individuals, i.e. bicultural individuals are not required to act as mediators (Byram, 2008). In sum, three points of difference can be listed;

- 1- The process of being bicultural takes place in naturalistic setting while being intercultural is gained through education.
- 2- Bicultural, unlike intercultural, embodies an identity transformation.
- 3- Intercultural speakers are mediators while bicultural ones are not.

1.2.2.5. Intercultural and Native Speaker

Byram (2008) explained that the 'intercultural speakers' could be referred to as the 'intercultural mediators' who have

an understanding of the relationship between, on the one hand, their own language and language varieties and their own culture and culture of different groups in their

society and, on the other hand, the language (varieties) and culture(s) of others, between (inter) which they find themselves acting as mediators

Byram (2008, p.68)

The intercultural speaker is suggested as an alternative for the native speaker because the latter is a model that all teachers and learners wish to resemble, but in terms of language teaching/learning purposes, it is difficult to measure learners' competence in relation to this model, and this results in feelings of failure. Therefore, the native speaker model is useful for linguistic competence but not for intercultural competence (Byram,2008).

Within the same stream of thought, Kachru (2005) argued that the concept of the native speaker model in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) had to be reevaluated for two main reasons:

- 1- It implicitly suggests the imposition of one standard form of the language on the whole world, for English mainly British or American. However, this is not possible and desirable in the presence of other spoken varieties of English or so-called world Englishes. Besides, English nowadays is spoken as a second or as a lingua franca, not only as a first language by its native speakers. Consequently, different English varieties are spreading in the world (Ricento,2005).
- 2- In SLA, there are some widely spoken languages (e.g. Swahili) within which we cannot find an 'ideal native speaker', but this phenomenon cannot be ignored by SLA researchers. Moreover, Phillipson (2000 p. 98) claimed that the dichotomy native/ non-native speaker is "offensive and hierarchical in that they take the native as the norm, and define the other negatively in relation to this norm" (cited in Ricento, 2005 p. 903).

1.2.3. Models of Intercultural Communicative Competence

A range of researchers in a variety of disciplines –mainly communication studies, business and management, foreign language education, applied linguistics and social psychology tried to develop models of ICC to frame its aspects (Spencer –Oatey, 2010; Brabant, Watson and Gallois,2007). This section is devoted to overview the most famous ones related to foreign language education.

1.2.3.1. Kramersch Model (1993)

Kramersch (1993) discussed the shift in teaching language and culture ; she presented four main lines of thought that characterized this shift from focusing on the transformation of cultural information (Big C) to featuring language and culture as social practice and construct respectively (focus on small ‘c’ culture). These lines of thought can be summarized as follows:

- 1- *Establishing a ‘sphere of interculturality’*; rather than transforming information from one culture to another, there should be a reflection on both the native and the target culture.
- 2- *Teaching culture as an interpersonal process*; there should be a focus on the social interaction among learners and teachers as a way of constructing meaning and understanding the other.
- 3- *Teaching culture as difference*; there should be a consideration of the multiethnicity and multiculturalism that exist within the culture per se.
- 4- *Crossing disciplinary boundaries*; insights from different disciplines -as ethnography, anthropology, sociology and sociolinguistics- should be consulted for a better understanding of one’s and other’s cultures.

She claimed that intercultural education should aim at developing intercultural competence, therefore, she proposed a four-step approach:

1- Reconstruct the context of production and reception of the text within the foreign culture.

2-Construct with the foreign learners their own context of reception, i.e. find an equivalent phenomenon in the native culture and construct it with its own network of meanings.

3-Examine the way each culture views the other.

4-Lay the ground for a dialogue that could lead to change.

In her model, Kramersch (1993) emphasized two main concepts; comparing cultures, and establishing the 'third place'. Comparing one's own culture with the target culture to find out similarities and differences ensures an understanding of the native culture especially the invisible culturally shaped knowledge which is applied subconsciously in everyday interactions. Byram (1997) echoed this idea when he explained that socialization, be it primary or secondary/ formal or informal, leads to the construction of individuals' social identities where some knowledge is conscious, and some other is unconscious, but it can be made conscious through the comparison of one's own group with other social groups.

Once this understanding takes place, it provides a solid platform for learners' gradual decentring from their own culture. Understanding the target culture, then, bridge the gap between cultural differences to establish their own understanding, a third kind of culture, or 'the third place'. The latter refers to the learners' opportunities for change while learning a new language, and which enables them "to take both an insider's and an outsider's view" (Kramersch, 1993 p.210) on both the native and the target culture. She

asserted that this process can take place through the social interaction and dialogue within which both action and reflection are required from the part of learners to define their third place, a place that no one else could identify.

1.2.3.2. Bennett's Model (1993)

In his model, 'The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity' (DMIS), Bennett (1993) put emphasis on developing intercultural sensitivity as the ultimate goal of cultural learning. He described it as "the construction of reality as increasingly capable of accommodating cultural difference" (p.24). This model did not focus on behaviour, but rather is a cognitive and phenomenological model that distinguished between ethnocentrism and ethnorelativism. The former refers to the judgment of different phenomena using one's own knowledge, while the latter refers to a judgment made via relying on different ways of perception.

Bennett (1993) distinguished three ethnocentric stages: denial, defense and minimization, and other three ethnorelative stages : acceptance, adaptation and integration.

- 1- Denial; at this stage, learners do not recognize the existence of other cultures or the difference between them and their own; they assume their culture to be central.
- 2- Defense; learners do not develop a clear picture of the cultural difference; instead they regard it as a threat. Hence, cultural differences can be perceived, but evaluated negatively. He further distinguished three kinds of defense :
 - a/ Denigration : negative evaluation is directed to some cultural aspects within the other culture which may result in prejudice and stereotypes.
 - b/ Superiority : learners view their own culture as superior.
 - c/ Reversal : learners view the other culture as superior.

- 3- Minimization; learners can recognize difference, but it is given little importance. At this stage, learners start to become interculturally sensitive.
- 4- Acceptance; learners naturally recognize cultural difference.
- 5- Adaptation ; learners develop skills that help them function appropriately with the different others
- 6- Integration; learners are both marginal and integrated in a specific environment i.e. although learners do not share all perceptions with the surrounding environment, they are able to understand and grasp meaning.

Through cultural learning, the learner moves from ethnocentric to ethnorelative stages to be 'a marginal person' ; one who has no particular natural cultural identity, rather he can instead look at a situation from multiple perspectives.

Although Bennett's model focuses on 'intercultural sensitivity', the latter is linked to intercultural competence in the sense that greater cultural sensitivity leads to greater intercultural competence (Hammer, Bennett & Wiseman, 2003). Relating theory to practice, Bennett (1993) claimed that cultural similarity activities better suit learners in the second ethnocentric stage 'defense' ; however, the third stage 'minimization' is best dealt with using activities focusing on cultural difference. Moreover, intercultural sensitivity could be promoted through intercultural interaction. People at the final level reach ethnorelativism i.e. they are able to see all cultures as equal. However, Bennett's model was criticized for his assumption regarding the final stage of development, or the 'integrated marginality state' (Shaules, 2007).

1.2.3.3. Byram's Model (1997)

In addition to linguistic, sociolinguistic and discourse competence, Byram (1997) proposed a comprehensive model of ICC in which he discussed five factors that are necessary for successful intercultural interaction, and which are:

- 1- Savoir : knowledge of self and the other, and processes of interaction.
- 2- Savoir comprendre : skills of interpreting and relating.
- 3- Savoir s'engager : skills of critical culture awareness.
- 4- Savoir apprendre/faire : skills of discovery and interaction.
- 5- Savoir être : attitudes. (Byram ,1997, p.34)

The model is further illustrated by the following figure. The latter shows how the different savors and subcompetencies interrelate and complete each other.

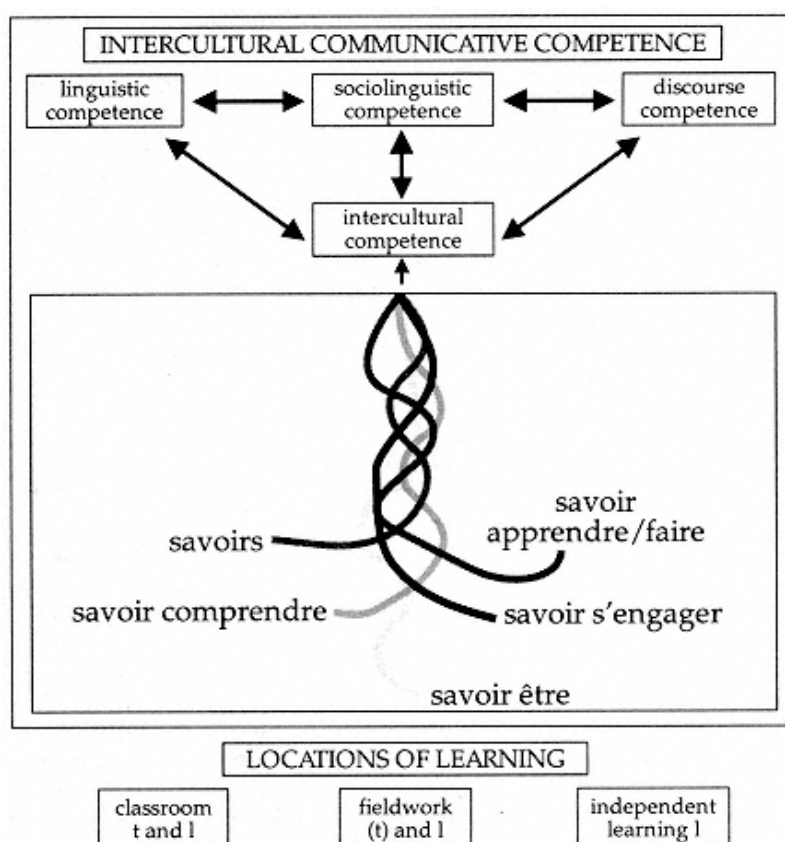


Figure 02. Byram's model (Byram, 1997 p 73)

As shown in the figure, *Knowledge* is divided into two main categories :

a/ knowledge about the social groups to which the individual belong, besides knowledge about the interlocutor's group. The former is acquired through the processes of 'primary' and 'secondary' socialization that takes place within the family, while the latter through formal education. Knowledge about the other groups can be raised through contact with their members. These days technology and communication networks allow for a huge exchange between groups, that travelling abroad is not necessary to have contact with different groups. Moreover, individuals have more knowledge about countries that gained dominance in politics and Media like the U.S.A.

b/ Knowledge of the processes of interaction at individual and societal levels. Knowledge of oneself and the differing other is not enough for successful interaction; it should be twined with the knowledge of how to act appropriately in different situations.

Skills of Interpreting and Relating: these skills are based on knowledge i.e. already acquired knowledge of both the native and the other contexts. This knowledge helps in the establishment of relationships, understanding and discovering meanings, and resolving dysfunctions and contradictions.

Skills of critical cultural awareness: they refer to learners' ability "to evaluate, critically and on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries" (Byram, 1997 p.53). Critical cultural awareness is a central element within ICC, and its development helps learners to take action, and be active citizens (Byram, 2008).

Skills of discovery and interaction: they are useful when the existing knowledge is not enough to deal with a particular situation. Individuals need to discover new phenomena

and elicit their meanings then relate them to others. Although the skill of discovery can operate in different ways, social interaction is the most prominent mode.

Attitudes: they regarded a pre-condition for successful interaction, be they negative as prejudice or stereotypes or positive. Hence, FL learners need to develop

attitudes of curiosity and openness, of readiness to suspend disbelief and judgment with respect to others' meanings, beliefs and behaviours [...], willingness to suspend belief in one's own meanings and behaviours, and to analyse them from the view point of the others (Byram 1997 p 34).

In other words, learners need to 'decentre' themselves from their own culture, to 'reconstruct' their social identity according to the new norms in a process of « tertiary socialization » (p 34).

Byram (1997) argued that these skills are not separate but interdependent and operate in relation to each other. They could be acquired through personal experience and interaction, but also through education, be it in class or pedagogically structured outside the classroom. Byram (2008) ensured that the aim of this model is educational. To fulfill this aim, he suggested a list of teaching objectives that correspond to his model's components, together with clarifications of the teachers' and learners' role. In sum, he gave importance to four aspects:

- 1- Abstract principles: attitudes, knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction. These principles lead to a fifth skill; critical cultural awareness.
- 2- Curricula objectives.
- 3- Learner behaviours, examples of behaviours that are evidence for the learners' ICC development.

4- Methods of assessment.

1.2.3.4. Intercultural Competence Assessment Model (2007)

Precht and Davidson Lund (2007) presented the INCA project (2001-2004) framework of ICC, be they members of it. The INCA is a European collaborative and generic project that aimed at developing “a valid framework of intercultural competence and robust instruments for assessing [it]” (ibid, p.467). This framework is mainly based on that of Byram’s (1997), Kohlmann and Stahl (1998), Ward (2001) and Gudykunt (1988). It comprises six components with three elements within each : motivation, skill/knowledge and behaviour. This results in 18 component competences as shown in the following table.

*Table 02 .**Components and elements of INCA model*

	A. Motivation	B. Skill / Knowledge	C. Behaviour
i. Tolerance for ambiguity (TA)	Readiness to embrace and work with ambiguity	Ability to handle stress consequent on ambiguity	Managing ambiguous situations
ii. Behavioural flexibility (BF)	Readiness to apply and augment the full range of one’s existing repertoire of behaviour	Having a broad repertoire and the knowledge of one’s repertoire	Adapting one’s behaviour to the specific situation

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<p>iii.</p> <p>Communicative awareness (CA)</p>	<p>Willingness to modify existing communicative conventions</p>	<p>Ability to identify different communicative conventions, levels of foreign language competencies and their impact on intercultural communication</p>	<p>Negotiating appropriate communicative conventions for intercultural communication and coping with different foreign language skills</p>
<p>iv.</p> <p>Knowledge discovery (KD)</p>	<p>Curiosity about other cultures in themselves and in order to be able to interact better with people.</p>	<p>Skills of ethnographic discovery of situation-relevant cultural knowledge (including technical knowledge) before, during and after intercultural encounters</p>	<p>Seeking information to discover culture-related knowledge.</p>
<p>v.</p> <p>Respect for otherness (RO)</p>	<p>Willingness to respect the diversity and coherence of</p>	<p>Critical knowledge of such systems (including one's</p>	<p>Treating equally different behaviour, value and</p>

vi. Empathy (E)	behaviour, value and belief systems. Willingness to take the other's perspectives	own when making judgements). Skills of role-taking de-centring; awareness of different perspectives	convention systems experienced in intercultural encounters. Making explicit and relating culture-specific perspectives to each other
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Source. Precht and Davidson Lund 2007, p. 472.

1.2.3.5. Deardorff's Model (2009)

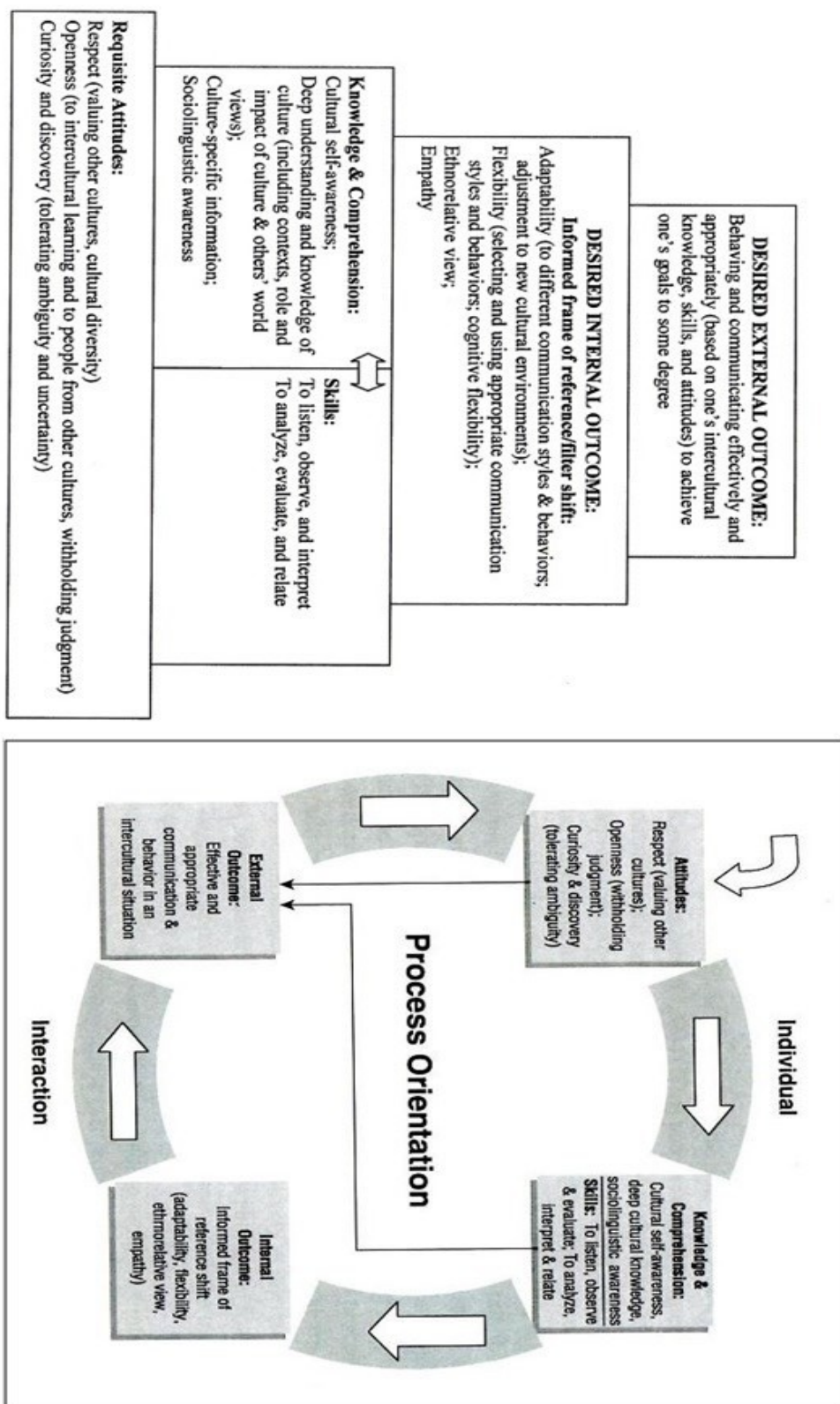
In this model, ICC development is an ongoing process that focuses on both internal and external outcomes of intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2009). As a result, “the overall external outcome of intercultural competence is defined as effective and appropriate behavior and communication in intercultural situations” (Deardorff, 2011a p. 66). ICC is suggested to comprise attitudes, knowledge, skills, and internal and external outcomes.

First, attitudes in this model come first and they are those of respect, openness, curiosity and discovery. These imply showing interest in others, and willingness to go beyond one's own perspectives. Second, knowledge includes two types; cultural-self awareness –or knowledge of one's own culture and how it influences one's worldview and identity-, and culture-specific knowledge which include an understanding of how others view the world. Third, skills include those of “observation, listening, evaluating, analyzing, interpreting, and relating” (Deardorff, 2011b p. 39), i.e. critical thinking skills. Fourth, the

acquisition of attitudes, knowledge and skills results in “flexibility, adaptability, ethnorelative perspective and empathy” (Deardorff, 2011b p.39) which are regarded as the internal outcomes. Finally, effectiveness and appropriateness are the external outcomes that can be determined either by the individuals themselves or by the other persons respectively.

The following figure illustrates Deardorff’s model with its two shapes; the pyramid model which was presented first, and the process model that was argued for after revision.

Figure 03



Source. Deardorff's model (Deardorff, 2009 pp 13, 33)

Conclusion

The understanding of the interdependence of language and culture, on the one hand, and the mechanisms of communication across cultures, on the other hand, lead to an educative approach that encompasses the three components: language, culture and learning i.e. 'Intercultural Pedagogy'. This type of pedagogy aims at developing the intercultural communicative competence (ICC) which was put under scrutiny in the present chapter in an attempt to clarify it and to distinguish it from close concepts. The next chapter will approach the intercultural pedagogy and investigate its recent applications in the field of language teaching and learning.

Chapter Two: Intercultural Pedagogy and Social Media

Introduction

The present chapter is divided into three main sections. Pedagogy in general deals with the aim of the syllabi, learning processes and teaching methods together with assessment. Therefore, in the present chapter, the first section provides an overview of intercultural pedagogy to pave the way for the second section to put emphasis on internet-mediated intercultural pedagogy. However, internet-mediated pedagogy embeds the use of numerous and multiple online tools, and thus, the third section is devoted to describe the one used in the present research; Facebook.

Section One: Overview of Intercultural Pedagogy

The present section, dealing with intercultural pedagogy, covers definitions of such type of pedagogy, the arguments of its proponents and opponents, its aims, and the place of culture within the teaching methods. It ends with the assessment of ICC and how it could be achieved.

2.1.1. Definitions, Pros and Cons

By the 1990s, modern language education has shifted focus to intercultural pedagogy to prepare learners for a multicultural world. Such paramount importance that culture has gained in the field of language teaching/learning can be traced back to:

- 1) Pragmatic motive; placing culture in education as a tool for international communication,
- 2) educational motive; movements towards acquiring non-native cultures to widen learners' world-view, and

3) intercultural studies; mediating between language and culture to reach beneficial communication and interaction (Buttjes, 1991) .

Intercultural language learning encompasses: culture, language and learning, and is defined as:

The process of acquiring the culture-specific and culture-general knowledge, skills, attitudes required for effective communication and interaction with individuals from other cultures. It is a dynamic developmental, and ongoing process which engages the learner cognitively, behaviourally, and affectively.

(Paige, Jorstad, Siaya, Klein & Colby 2003 cited in Ho, 2009 p.65)

Intercultural pedagogy put focus on the dynamic nature of culture, so that learners are encouraged to engage themselves in the interpretation of cultural facts that vary from one situation to the other depending on time, space, generation, class or region. Furthermore, it views culture as a set of individual practices, hence, language-culture learning involves acquiring knowledge about culture, comparing cultures, exploring cultures; and finding one's own 'third place' between cultures (Crozet & Liddicoat, 2002; Liddicoat, 2002 cited in Ho, 2009). Within the same stream of thought, Borelli(1991) defined intercultural pedagogy (I.P) as both:

A/ A social science; it is an ideologically critical category of society, rather than a free ideology. i.e. I.P reflects society through intervention into societal practice, not affirmation.

B/ Science of education; it considers emancipations and practice as paradigms and major constituents. As a scientific pedagogical system, Borrelli (1991) manifested that I.P. can be conceptualized under two conditions:

- 1/ It cannot work without scientific foundations based upon justified principles, and
- 2/ the critical stage is necessary in the enlightening and enlightened practice as a reference and as a methodological preliminary decision for its construction (Borrelli, 1991 p. 279).

In other words, I.P should make individual and society constraints transparent, questionable and solvable.

Researchers in the field of language teaching/learning divided into two main groups; the first is against while the second is with the integration of culture within language teaching/learning. Alpatekin (1993) listed a number of problems that may occur if culture is integrated, he manifested that:

- Learners may face difficulty in expressing themselves because they have little experience with the target culture, this can be seen in the poor performance they show while performing in the target culture compared with their expression of native culture artifacts.
- Developing new identity may affect negatively learners' mental equilibrium.
- Learners may not accept the target culture elements considering them alien modes of behaviour.
- Presenting British and American cultures gives the impression that these cultures are correct and good while others are not.
- Learners would develop stereotypes concerning the cultures presented.

Besides, Cakir (2006) pointed out that both learners and teachers may reject the integration of culture because teachers may regard it as a threat to the native values, while learners may not feel its importance, for the majority does not have the opportunity to

travel/ live abroad. Similarly, Nisbett (2003), as shown in the following quote, questioned the impact of teaching on changing people's beliefs and attitudes

if people nearly do differ profoundly in their systems of thought – their worldviews and cognitive processes- then differences in people's attitudes and beliefs, and even their values and preferences might not be a matter merely of different inputs and teachings, but rather an inevitable consequence of using different tools to understand the world. And if that's true, then efforts to improve international understanding may be less likely to pay off than one might hope

(cited in Shaules, 2007 p. 47)

Then, if the aim of teaching culture is to enable learners decentre from their own cultural shaped worldview, it would be useless.

Arguing for I.P, Agar (2002) argued that the concept of culture is no more valid because of globalization, he posited that

for most anyone today, the 'cultures' that affect him/her at any given moment are multiple, local to global, partial and variable in their impact. Culture used to be a way to describe, generalize and explain what a person was doing. It is not so easy – may be even impossible- to do that anymore (cited in Shaules, 2007 p. 30)

Echoing the same idea, Kramsch (2001) argued that, nowadays, travelling abroad is not necessary to encounter target cultures because international influences, be they culture-bound or shaped by culture, come home. Similarly, Shaules (2007) contended that although the expansion of communication technologies was predicted to turn the world into a "global village", they allow for a huge amount of cultural knowledge about the other

without action to adapt oneself with it .i.e. we may interact with people from a different culture without getting access to their deep culture, which creates misunderstanding.

Consequently, globalization does not abolish culture differences as predicted, and such intercultural experiences can not threaten or change the way people perceive their reality. This view is further supported by the fact that individuals in cyberspace communities have the chance to select members with whom they interact on the basis of shared views. This fact rather leads to an increase in intercultural conflicts.

Within the same stream of thought, Purba (2011) summarized the reasons that lie behind the importance of teaching culture in four points:

- 1- Language and culture are inseparably connected,
- 2- teaching language is teaching culture,
- 3- to communicate effectively and successfully, and
- 4- raising learners' motivation.

In other words, the inseparable nature of language and culture necessitates culture teaching. Buttjes (1990) further explained that language teaching is culture teaching because language codes cannot be taught alone; sociocultural features found on different levels cannot be ignored. In addition, the intercultural mediation that FL learners undergo should be considered by teachers in class (cited in Purba, 2011).

Hence, language acquisition cannot be successful unless it is accompanied by the process of acculturation (Schumann,1978). In this vein, Alpetekin (1993) explained the importance of schematic knowledge in order to learn systemic data. FL learners, for example readers, cannot understand the writer's intended meaning because they tend to use

their mother tongue schematic knowledge instead of the target one, and the dictionary definitions are not enough to enable them do so; they need to develop cultural competence. In this case, culture helps learners to be more successful, motivated, and facilitates language acquisition through the fulfillment of various roles as shown in figure04.

Thus, learners need the target culture for an appropriate comprehension, interpretation, translation and production of oral and/or written texts .i.e. besides verbal communication, paralinguistic features (hand signals, postures, mimics...) play a major role in communication. Moreover, Byram (1997) argued for I.P and opposed some educational systems (e.g. Qatar) which teach English using the original culture to reinforce the national identity. He explained that

Such countries feel a strong need for English as a Lingua Franca(ELF) for the technological advances it can bring, for example, but fear the influences it may bring with it [...] and it is recognized that through the study of another culture that one becomes more aware of one's own(Byram, 1997 p.112).

In other words, having knowledge about other cultures helps individuals be more aware of their own, especially of those aspects which are unconscious or taken for granted. However, the teaching of culture should be also guided by a rationale to avoid the blind simulation of the target culture. In this sense, Buttjes (1991) explained that I.P should integrate both aspects of communication and education, as illustrated in the following figure:

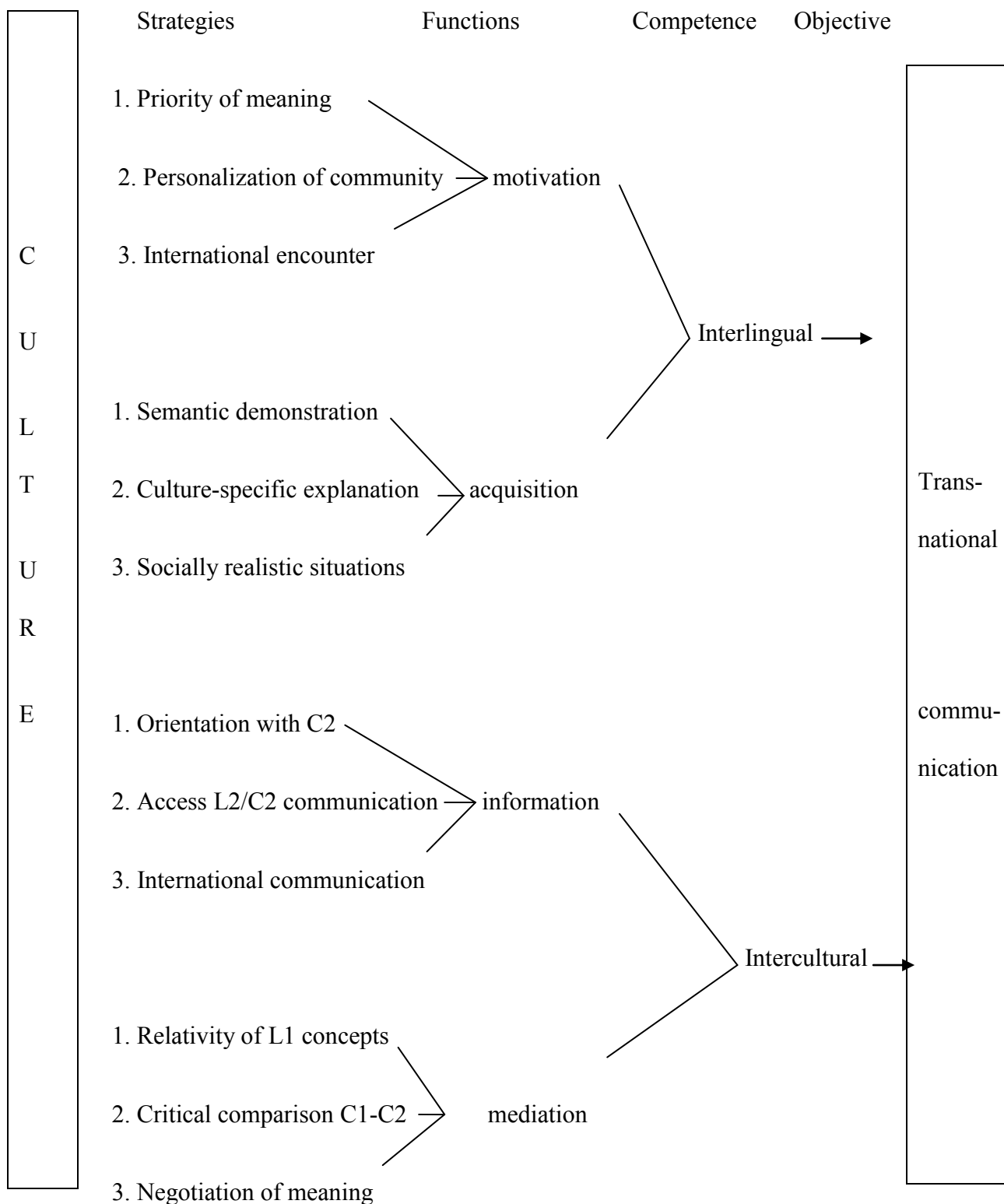


Figure 04. Foreign language and intercultural learning (Buttjes, 1991p. 10)

2.1.2. Aims of Intercultural Pedagogy

After an intercultural debate that lasted for years, Buttjes (1991) claimed that some notions have been recognised, agreed upon and included:

1) Intercultural learning means that:

- Learners' identities must be respected as starting points and receiving ends in intercultural mediation,
- Language teaching can be only one of several influences on the formation of intercultural competence, and
- 'Interculturalising' education reaches beyond language teaching.

2) Ethnographic observation is useful in both constructing teaching material and in training teachers (Buttjes, 1991 p.12).

The aforementioned notions are reflected in the aims of I.P. The latter does not aim at imitating native speaker peers, but at developing the intercultural communicative competence together with international understanding (Byram,1991; Cakir, 2006). Success in this domain is measured within the individual learner, not in external settings where adaptation is required. I.P attempts to help learners understand “ (1) the nature of culture, (2) how cultural difference affects communication and human relations, and (3) the influence of culture and cultural difference in specific domains such as business or language learning” (Shaules, 2007 p. 85) to prepare them for “ a world citizenship which allows us to develop and allegiance to humanity as a whole” (Shaules, 2007 p. 85).

In other words, I.P. aims go beyond culture and language teaching. However, fostering positive attitudes towards other cultures is accompanied with understanding the

linguistic and behavioural patterns of both the target and the native culture i.e. learners' native cultures should not be marginalized in class, otherwise, learners would feel suspicious about their contributions to their communities (Moore, 1999). Such I.P helps learners adapt a wider perspective in the perception of reality through raising interest in foreign cultures and viewing one's own culture in a broader context (Byram et. al. 1991; Cakir, 2006). Finally, I.P aims at making teaching/learning more enjoyable inside and outside class allowing learners to interact with foreigners with confidence and interest (Byram et.al, 1991; Cakir, 2006).

A close look at the aims of I.P reveals that they embody 'tertiary socialization' (Byram et.al, 1991). The latter "is prescriptive, suggesting purposes and objectives for education, rather than being descriptive as the concepts of primary and secondary socialization" (Byram, 2008 p. 113). In other words, teachers or educators can help FL/SL learners understand new different concepts which could help them develop social identities that are not constrained by a particular language. However, this cannot take place only through providing cultural knowledge, but "it comes from considering [one's] own mindset, comparing with [one's] counterpart's mindset [...] and then deciding how to proceed on the basis of what [has been] learned" (Tomalin, 2009 p.116). Although some researchers stood against the integration of culture in language teaching/learning, it cannot be denied that culture is always there. This presence is noticed in the different teaching methods.

2.1.3. Culture in the Teaching Methods

Before the Second World War, the term culture meant "knowledge about great works of literature, social institutions and historical events, acquired through the translation of written works" (Kramsch, 2001 p. 201). At that time, the focus was on the

study of big 'C' culture through the study of geography, history, arts, music, and institutions of the Great Britain and the U.S.A. These courses were labeled differently: "Landeskunde" in Germany; "civilization" in France, "civilta" in Italy; "background studies" or "British and American culture" in Bulgaria (Kramsch, 2001). The old methods of teaching culture focused on presenting the geographical, historical, and major masterpieces of the target culture. However, these methods resulted in passive learning that hinders the understanding of real life behavior patterns (Purba, 2011).

Although Lado's (1957) "Linguistics across Cultures" was the first work that claimed for linking language and culture in teaching a second/foreign language,

insights gained by research in intercultural communication have made English teachers aware of the cultural dimensions of language as social interaction. While literature and 'high' culture waned in importance, the small 'c' culture of attitudes and mind-sets, lifestyles and interactional styles became crucially important to successful communication in EFL (Kramsch, 2001 p. 204).

In other words, the findings of intercultural communication studies shifted focus from the big 'C' elements of culture to small 'c' elements, be they the key for a successful intercultural communication using a second/foreign language. These claims are summarized in the following table, with relevance to the teaching methods.

*Table 03 .**The Development of culture learning*

period	Trends/ movements	Nature of culture/ focus on	Role of culture in foreign language classroom
1950s- 1960s	Grammar- translation	Big 'c' facts	Cultural knowledge for the reading of literature
Late 1960s	Audiolingual movement	Little 'c' facts differences that might impede communication in L2	Knowledge of culture necessary for building vocabulary
1970s- 1980s	Communicative competence	Language pragmatics sociolinguistic facts (greeting, apologizing, breakdown etc..)	Knowledge of culture to avoid communication
1990s- present	Intercultural communicative competence	Process of culture learning essential integration of language and culture	Culture = core Context and purpose for authentic language instruction.

Source. Fu,2001 cited in Xiao, 2010 p 11.

2.1.4. Developing Intercultural Communicative Competence

The development of ICC does not imply an abandonment of one's culture, but rather an understanding of the other to avoid judgment (Byram,1991). However, the process of being intercultural is "unique for each individual and takes place in the

interaction between individuals and in self-reflection of the individual” (Lundgren, 2009 p.137). Mayer (1991) suggested three levels of intercultural performance:

- 1- Monocultural level; it is a starting point where learners cannot realize or solve intercultural problems. Learners at this level are ethnocentric; they use their mother culture when they encounter interaction problems.
- 2- Intercultural level; the learner can realize and explain differences between his own culture and the target culture based on previously acquired knowledge. However, they are not able to mediate, negotiate or solve interaction problems. This level implies a number of intermediate stages.
- 3- Transcultural level; learners are able to realize, explain, negotiate differences, and solve intercultural problems. They show a cross-cultural understanding without neglecting their own culture and identity.

Similarly, Afrin (2013) suggested that learning about other cultures should follow given stages:

- The elementary stage: in which teachers discuss with learners everyday practices of the target language peers; their families, living conditions, festivals, relations with others, marriage customs...
- Intermediate and advanced stages: they discuss subjects like geography, history, business, music and arts (Afrin, 2013 p.73).

These stages are referred to as: basic, intermediate and full levels and have been agreed upon by researchers (Prechtel & Davidson Lund, 2007).

The development of ICC is neither related to language competence nor to reflective and professional competences (Kordes, 1991). In other words, having a good linguistic

competence does not ensure having developing ICC, and the same for other professional competences. And although the integration of culture within the foreign language class is inevitably agreed upon by a wide range of researchers, the problem lies in the methods that teachers follow to present the target culture in class. In other words, the sustain of the old habit of putting emphasis on grammatical correctness, inherited from structural approaches, is noticed (Dai, 2011). Therefore, it was claimed that the development of ICC can be reached through the use of some teaching techniques like role play, authentic materials, proverbs, films, ethnographic studies, poems and literature, cultural capsules, etc. (Purba, 2011).

Dai (2011) concurred with Oxford's (1996) division of teaching culture into three parameters: (1) information sources, (2) activity type, and (3) positive interaction for the sake of 'cultural texture'.

- 1- *Information sources*; different information sources that facilitate culture teaching can be found; they can be visual, audio or tactile to address different learners' learning styles. These sources' list has been widely enlarged by the fast development of technology, therefore, teachers should be aware and should adapt themselves with the current changes to follow the new classroom management approaches in designing and teaching cultural courses. Some of these resources, that teachers could use and encourage their students to look for cultural information in, are listed in the following table

Table 04.

Information sources.

Extract from literary	Multimedia software
Internet	DVD and CDS
Films and TV	Information sources Illustrations
Encyclopedias	Video
Literature	Newspapers, magazines
Background information	Interviews
Anecdotes	Photographs
Field work	Plays and songs

Source. *Dai, 2011 p. 1032.*

2- *Activity type*; a number of activities were suggested by Dai (2011, pp 1032-1034) in which teachers should ensure learners' engagement ;

a/ Conducting topic-oriented activity ; the teacher proposes a topic for discussion about which learners talk using their cultural norms and knowledge, and the teacher adjusts them in case they are misled by their native culture, and help them put away cultural boundaries that exist between their origin and target culture.

b/ Taking activity logs ; students use notebooks to write down their learning experiences – inside or outside class-, mainly those related to cultural learning. This type of activity helps in encouraging learners' reflect on their own learning, guiding teachers' feedback, practicing writing, and establishing teacher-learner dialogue.

c/ Selecting authentic materials ; they include dialogues, films, videotapes... where a wide range of the target culture is manifested. However, they should be carefully selected to suit learners' level and interests. Thus, multimedia and network technology helps teachers

providing background knowledge to foster cultural understanding, raise learners' curiosity, motivation and interest, and pair learning and enjoyment.

d/ Employing prediction ; prediction is different from guessing, it involves the use of learners' knowledge of language, the world life and experiences to predict the content of the material from provided title, topic, video, pictures...

In teaching culture, knowledge of the existing differences between the native and the target culture would help making reasonable predictions.

e/ Doing research based learning ; it helps in developing better understanding of the topic, initiating sessions of discussion through asking and answering questions leading to long-term interest in the target culture.

This list of activities provided by Dai (2011) was enlarged by other researchers. Clouet (2006), for example, proposed the use of some other activities to promote learners' interest and involvement in class :

- a) Discussion activities; they encourage meta-talk through which learners compare and contrast their own culture with the target culture in subjects like culture symbols and products, culture behaviour, patterns of communication, and culture experiences. In this sense, authentic materials used should not ignore the content and aim at developing grammar.
- b) Quizzes; a successful type of activity to teach new information. They encourage learners to retrieve the background knowledge they have about the subject, make predictions, and then check these predictions through looking for the correct answers. The latter can be found in listening or reading scripts, videos, films, etc. not necessary provided by the teacher who should direct learners' attention to make contrast with their own culture. This type of activity raises learner's curiosity, interest and involvement.

However, Tomalin (2009, pp.118-130) divided activities into three types. The first type is the experiential activities, for example, Barnga (a card game), the towers of Deurdia (a simulation game), and the exclusion zone. The second type is the comparative activities, for example, the communicative Matrix, the cultural style profile, the 80/20 principle applied to culture, and the RADAR system. The third type is reflective activities, for example, coaching activities (need to know, personal interviewing, role-play, consultant circles).

Other researchers argued for the use of other activities like the critical incident, and learning gallery (Finkbeiner, 2009); simulation, role plays, culture assimilator, linguistic awareness of cultures and discourse analysis –based training (Rost-Roth, 2007 pp. 495-503)

3- *Positive interaction*; classroom interaction helps in changing teachers' pedagogical practices to go with learners' interests and demands, and allows for a deliberate evaluation of learners' performance. Creating cultural texture obliges teachers to include different views of the culture; introducing contrasts not only pleasant aspects.

Byram (1997) manifested the importance of both exposing learners to other cultures and empowering them with some techniques to interact successfully and appropriately in intercultural communication. Although it is impossible to teach learners all the other cultures they may encounter, providing techniques together with information about the native culture, as an example, would be of great significance.

7. Assessment of Intercultural Communicative Competence

Before discussing the assessment of ICC, a distinction should be made between evaluation, assessment and testing. Byram (2008) distinguished between assessment and

evaluation in educational settings. He manifested that assessment, from one hand, is “any means of placing an individual’s achievement on a scale” (p. 220). Evaluation, from the other hand, is the “process of analyzing whether a course of study is working successfully, meeting its own intentions, rather than the description of the success of individuals within the course of study” (Byram, 2008 p.220). Sharing the same view, Nunan (1992) argued that evaluation is a broad concept within which assessment can be a part; it does not focus only on learners’ achievement, but it encompasses collecting and analyzing information, together with making decisions about courses and programs. Dervin & Suamela-Salmi (2010) listed ten principles of effective assessment:

- 1- be for learning, not simply of learning;
- 2- should be reliable, valid, fair and consistent;
- 3- should consist of effective and constructive feedback;
- 4- should be innovative and have the capacity to inspire and motivate;
- 5- should measure understanding and application, rather than technique and memory;
- 6- should be conducted throughout the course, rather than being positioned as a final event;
- 7- should develop key skills such as peer and reflective assessment;
- 8- should be central to staff development and teaching strategies, and frequently reviewed;
- 9- should be of manageable amount for both tutors and students;
- 10- should encourage dialogue between students and their tutors, and students and their peers.

(Dervin & Suamela-Salmi, 2010 p. 15)

Henceforth, assessment is a continuous process that involves both conscious and unconscious judgments about learners’ learning process, and which testing is a part of – be it the evaluation of learners’ learning at specific points of time (Brown, 2003).

The assessment of ICC has been regarded as a complex process that is characterized by limited practice and within which a number of problematic questions can be faced (Prechtl & Davidson Lund, 2007). Its difficulty lies in the absence of researchers' consensus on one unified definition of ICC (Deardorff, 2006), whether ICC should be assessed holistically or separately (measuring each component individually), and whether it should be assessed quantitatively or qualitatively (Helm & Davies, 2010).

Deardorff (2011a) claimed that the first step in assessing ICC is to select an operational definition from literature to determine the aspects to be assessed and the level (individual, program or organization). Setting the ICC definition allows for an identification of goals and measurable objectives, which in turn affect the selection of assessment methods and tools. In this vein, Helm & Davies (2010) argued that ICC should be assessed holistically because the individual components are interdependent.

The quantitative assessment using pen and pencil tests was criticized for being suitable only in assessing knowledge, but not other components of ICC that are not observable like attitudes (Byram, 1997; Làzàr et.al. 2007). The team of the INCA project echoed this view questioning the sufficiency of using questionnaires because of their inability to test behaviours, and the possibility of getting socially desirable answers (Prechtl & Davidson Lund, 2007). Griffith et.al. (2016) posited that ICC tests can be used, but they should consider the issue of faking through the use of multiple item types, testing culture-general knowledge instead of culture-specific, and measuring the interactional domain through the use of scenario-based items. Làzàr et.al. (2007) argued that the assessment of ICC should rely more on 'formative' rather than on 'summative' assessment to enable the teacher cover the behavioural, cognitive, and affective domains of ICC. It should be a

continuous process in which both the teachers and learners should take part. However, Dervin (2010) posited that both formative and summative should be used.

The complexity of the ICC concept necessitates the use of both direct and indirect methods (Deardorff, 2011; Lázár et.al., 2007). The direct tools include performance assessments, observation and portfolios, while indirect tools include surveys, interviews and focus groups (Deardorff, 2011).

Performance assessments ; they test the observed behaviour through using , for example, pen and paper tests and multiple choice questions. Byram (1997) asserted that performance assessment is not suitable for all ICC components.

Observation; observing the learners' performance and assessing it against a grid, it is mainly criticized for its validity, reliability and subjectivity of the observer (Dervin, 2010).

Portfolios; they include essays, reports, journals, personal reflections, photos, test results, certificates, tasks' accomplishment that mirror learners' experience and progression in ICC (Brown, 2003; Byram, 1997). It allows for portraying both the outcomes and the processes of ICC development (Wang, 2010).

Surveys; Griffith et.al. (2016, pp. 08-11) summarized the surveys developed to assess ICC They reviewed about 32 surveys including those mentioned by fantini (2009) but excluding those assessing language proficiency (see Appendix B).

Researchers in the domain of ICC assessment concluded that the use of one tool or another is not sufficient. Yet, the best way to assess ICC is “through a mix of qualitative and quantitative measures” (Deardorff, 2006, p. 241). Similarly, Precht and Davidson Lund (2007, p.486) argued that “ any assessment should consist of a combination of self-assessment exercises and scenarios with open-ended answers [...] as well as exercises

based on face-to-face interaction". In other words, researchers agreed upon the use of 'Triangulation', or the use of two or more methods which are different in nature, and the selection of which should be related to the ICC dimensions (Làzàr et.al., 2007). Basing their distinction between ICC dimensions on Byram's model (1997), Làzàr et.al. (2007) explained that the assessment of Knowledge/ Savoirs can be attained through, for instance, the use of multiple choice questions, matching statements. For the assessment of know how/ savoir faire, techniques as role plays and critical incidents are recommended, while the assessment of being/savoir être can be done by teachers using observation grids or performance profiles, or by learners evaluating themselves using surveys on attitudes, culture logs, portfolios, and reflective thinking.

Besides, Làzàr et.al. (2007) emphasized the importance of issues of validity, reliability and feasibility of the measurement tools. In other words, the tools should assess what should be assessed, they should be stable throughout contexts, and they should be practical within time constraints.

Section Two: Internet-Mediated Intercultural Pedagogy

This second section spots light on the use of ICT in education, and focuses on one of the essential computer mediated communication (CMC) activities in Foreign Language Education (FLE), and one of the CALL key tools available to FL educators, telecollaboration. It provides its definition, historical and theoretical backgrounds together with its pros and cons. The role of teachers in telecollaboration is clarified and the skills required are detailed.

2.2.1. Technology and Language Learning

The information and communication technology (ICT) tools are various; they include email, web pages (e.g. My space), blogs, instant messaging (chat), discussion forums, voice chat, videoconferencing, wiki, etc. and the list is open to everyday new emerging tools (Dooly, 2007). The use of ICT in education is argued to “enhance the quality of the input, and the authenticity of resources, provide relevant and useful feedback, connect students with remote audiences [...]” (Brett & González-LLoret, 2009 p. 351).

The changes that the ICT is bringing into our lives and societies can be noticed in language teachers, teacher training programs, and learners. Teachers' role expanded with the expansion of the range of the available tasks to include new technology based tasks (eg. listening with hypermedia support) (Chappelle, 2005). They shifted from being “sages on the stage” to “guides on the side” (Anderson, 2005 p. 03). Consequently, teacher training programs should integrate technology, not only as a course, but within the whole process (Chappelle, 2005).

Moreover, the integration of the ICT tools in FLT is a way to motivate learners because they have opportunities to interact and communicate with different peers, and to challenge the traditional classes. The latter were criticized for “a lack of personal attention, for being a cause for boredom, and for focusing on outdated knowledge and inappropriate skills for future workplaces” (Dooly, 2007 p. 214). Kramsch (1993 pp 200-201) echoed this view manifesting that computer-oriented learning differs from traditional learning for it is non-linear, context-bound, recursive, constructivist, and learner-directed. In other words, it allows for an explanatory learning through which learners rely on themselves to relate new information to the old one, reorganize it, and reinterpret it in relation to different contexts to construct a particular social reality.

However, new terms that describe types of learning within which technology is used emerged, and between which a distinction should be made. These terms include e-learning, online learning, distance learning, and blended learning. Although the terms e-learning and online learning are most of the time used interchangeably, Bates (2005) claimed that it is of paramount importance to recognize that “e-learning can encompass any form of telecommunications and computer-based learning, while online learning means using specifically the internet and the web” (Bates, 2005, p. 08). Within the same vein, Anderson (2005) argued that online learning is that kind of learning that takes place via the net, e-learning takes place through all electronic media not only the net, and in distance learning both electronic and non electronic media are used. Then, e-learning is broader than online learning, but it is a subset of distance learning.

Blended learning “represents a compromise, combining a face-to face component with computer-based distance learning where teacher and learner interact dynamically” (Jordan et.al. 2008, p. 228). It is defined as “learning that combines online activity with

more traditional periods of face-to-face contact and classroom interaction” (O’Dowd, 2007 p. 18). This kind of learning is claimed to satisfy the needs and the learning styles of a wider audience. Besides, the interaction with a variety of materials and technologies allows for learners’ knowledge construction and learning enhancement that take place through active engagement and collaboration with peers, teachers and experts. The latter would pave the learners’ way towards a more motivation, reflection and autonomous learning (Jordan et.al. 2008).

Jordan et.al. (2008) explained that there are four main approaches that have been identified within blended learning; self regulated approach, pedagogical approach, mixed approach, and learning outcome-based approach. In the first approach, interaction takes place between learners and ICTs without the interference of the teacher, to achieve a particular learning outcome. This approach is very common these days; learners have become familiar with the use of ICT in parallel with their classes. Such embedment may include the use of smart phones or personal computers, e-dictionaries, online translation, online articulation, the use of sharing tools/applications, etc. which enable them to learn in an easy and simple manner.

In the second approach, pedagogical approach, the teacher selects the teaching method with the ICTs appropriate for the context to achieve a particular learning/teaching outcome. The selected ICTs may or may not be used at the same time while delivering instruction; the teacher may use ICTs to present material (e.g. video, audio), then learners may discuss the content with the teacher/ peers, or do some type of activity which does not require the use of ICT. The use of ICTs could be outside class, like the recent use of videoconferencing to link distant learners with their teachers, or to link them with other speakers/ learners of English, in order to achieve a learning outcome.

In the third approach, mixed approach, both face-to-face and instructional technology are used in the delivery of lectures. The use of data shows to present the material is a common practice that could illustrate this approach in the Algerian context. In other developed countries, other tools, e.g. I-pads, are also used.

In the last approach, learning outcome-based approach, the learning outcome determines whether to use face-to-face or technology instruction. In other words, the learning outcomes differ throughout the syllabus, and thus, to achieve them, different ways of delivery may be needed. Following this approach implies that the methodology used is carefully aligned with the learning outcome of a particular lesson, and so are the ICTs selected.

2.2.2. Computer Assisted Language Learning

Since the invention of the computer in the 1960s, its possible use for education has been increasingly examined resulting in different labels that correspond to its use (LeBaron-Earle, 2013). However, the acronym 'CALL' emerged first in 1983 out of the TESOL convention in Toronto, Canada. It refers to "the broad range of activities associated with technology and language learning" (Chappelle, 2005 p.743). It was at the beginning marginal, but it gained recently the interest of researchers. Brett & González Lloret (2009) defined CALL as a wide field "that includes the use of Internet [...]; communication tools[...]; software and applications designed specifically for language learning, the authoring and publication of web, digital audio and video materials, etc." (Lloret, 2009 p. 351)

Hence, CALL or CBI (computer based instruction) refers simply to the use of computers in different manners to facilitate the process of teaching and learning. Designing computer-based instruction is referred to as 'instructional design' (ID) (Jordan et.al. 2008,

p. 229). In order for the latter to satisfy the needs and objectives of the competency-based learning, the material selected should be

- designed to meet a specific audience with specific learning needs;
- adaptable to different learning styles;
- broken down into discrete modular components;
- 'chunked' into discrete sub-sections to suit short-term memory;
- structured and organized to meet specific learning outcomes;
- enriched with hypermedia (sound and pictures) to assist dual coding;
- hyperlinked extensively to allow self-directed exploratory learning;
- sequenced appropriately;
- supported by formative assessment for feedback and for self-regulated learning.

(Jordan et.al. 2008, p. 230)

2.2.2.1. Theoretical Background

The cognitive and the social concerns and interests in L2 learning provided a theoretical background for CALL pedagogy. These interests are summarized by Pica (1997) as follows:

From the cognitive perspective, among the most prominent [interests] are L2 comprehension, planning and production; motivation; and attention to, and awareness of, L2 meaning and form. Social processes include various forms of communication and interaction, ranging from collaborative dialogue to instructional intervention, with mediation through negotiation of meaning .

(Cited in Chapelle, 2005 p. 747).

Engagement in the processes of comprehension, planning and production results in a deep learning and critical thinking. CALL helps learners develop personal and critical understanding and examination of the material they are exposed to, and to link it with previous knowledge, from one hand, and to transfer the acquired knowledge to other situations. Besides, the ability to reflect on the acquired knowledge leads to the development of metacognition and autonomy.

Focusing on interaction, Chapelle (2005) discussed the benefits of three types of interaction within three different perspectives; the interaction hypothesis, the sociocultural theory, and the processing theory. He summed them up in the table below.

Table 05.

Benefits of three types of interaction from three perspectives.

Perspectives on the value of interaction					
Basic types of interaction		Interaction Hypothesis		Sociocultural Theory	Depth of processing theory
Inter	between	Negotiation of meaning	of	Co-constructing meaning	Prompting attention to language
	people				
	between person	Obtaining modified input		Obtaining help for using language	Prompting attention to language
	and computer				
Intra	within the	Attending to linguistic form	to	Stimulating internal mental voice	Cognitive processing of the input
	person's mind				

Source. Chapelle, 2005 p.750.

Two types of interaction are based on Ellis (1999) distinction between 'interpersonal' interaction i.e. face-to-face interaction while communicating with other people, and

'intrapersonal' interaction i.e. that takes place within the person's mental processes. Chapelle (2005) added 'human-computer interaction' as a third type of interaction where computers provide the input or its simplified versions together with other means of help (e.g. dictionaries) to clarify meaning.

2.2.2.2. Pedagogical Evolution

Variation and shift in SLA theories marked and is reflected in the evolution of CALL overtime. At the beginning, during the 1960s and 1970s, the use of technology was influenced by behaviouristic learning and structural linguistics; it was restricted to student-computer interactions to practice grammatical and lexical drills or to do some transformation exercises i.e. focus was on language itself. At this period, the computer played the role of a 'tutor' that provided learners with grammar and vocabulary exercises, then gave them feedback. It was sometimes used to replace the teacher (Brett & González-Lloret, 2009; LeBaron-Earle, 2013). However, the major weaknesses that were noticed within this phase were "the lack of embodiment and the absence of the teacher" (Jordan et.al. 2008 p. 228).

With the advent of the communicative approach, the focus shifted to be put on meaning. Therefore, the role and the use of computers changed from a tool for individual learning to a tool that facilitates human interaction (Brett & González-Lloret, 2009). In the 1980s, the focus was on developing the communicative competence and cultural awareness, and thus, teaching the TL through interaction was the guiding principle. However, albeit the teaching material was carefully selected (e.g. maps, newspapers) to be authentic, the learning contexts and the human characters with whom learners interact were not authentic. At this period, the computer was used as a 'tool' or 'medium' for interaction,

and it did not aim at replacing the teachers, but at assisting their work (LeBaron-Earle, 2013).

The fast development of computers and technology together with the emergence of the Internet, in the 1990s, aided the educationalists' claims for more authentic situations and social learning. The latter was reflected in CMC through which communication takes place between learners and teachers with the help of computers and the Internet (LeBaron-Earle, 2013). Jordan et.al (2008, p. 228) echoed this view stating that "the computer now operates as a communication device rather than a teaching machine. This compromise addresses the problem of embodiment and materials". In other words, through facilitating face-to-face interaction between human beings, the need for authentic and highly prescriptive teaching materials, together with the search for the most appropriate method to implement are already addressed problems.

Recently, technology has been much more integrated in the teaching/ learning process, albeit those technologies were not invented to support leaning. The use of various web 2.0 services, including online games and social media, has become a part of social media assisted language learning (SMALL). Besides, the integrative CALL period is characterized by the use of telecollaborative projects in language teaching/ learning.

2.2.3. Telecollaborative Learning

Although it is new in FLE, telecollaborative learning has gained researchers' interest and developed its theoretical background, as it has provoked positive and negative reactions.

2.2.3.1. Definition

Telecollaborative pedagogy is characterized by the use of internet communication tools to bring together geographically distant groups of language learners and teachers in institutionalized settings for the sake of developing their foreign language skills and intercultural competence through social interaction, telecollaborative tasks, and project work (Belz, 2007, O'Dowd, 2013). This kind of pedagogy "is commonly characterised as ethnographic, dialogic and critical" (Belz, 2007 p.138). It takes place "under the careful guidance of languacultural experts" (ibid, p.158) i.e. under the supervision of teachers.

Recently, telecollaborative learning became one of the main pillars of CALL (O'Dowd, 2011). It has been referred to using various terminology including 'e-pals', 'key-pals', 'e-tandem', 'telecollaboration', 'Internet-mediated intercultural foreign language education' (O'Dowd, 2007 p.04), 'electronic team teaching' (Warschauer, 1995 cited in muller-Hartmann , 2007p.168), 'échanges interculturels exolingues en groupe en ligne' (EIEGL) in France (O'Dowd, 2011), 'online intercultural exchange (OIE), 'virtual exchange', or 'collaborative online international learning' (O'Dowd,2015).

Online intercultural exchange can take place between classes learning the languages of each other, or between two or more classes using a lingua franca (O'Dowd, 2011; Guth et. al. 2012). O'Dowd (2016) claimed that there is a consensus among researchers in the field that telecollaboration should be integrated into classroom context to include learners' reflection and interpretation together with teacher's support and guidance. Hence, although initial projects of telecollaboration were additional activities to which learners may not give enough attention and importance, "most telecollaborative activity in recent years has taken a blended approach where learners' online interactions and their reactions to this

interaction has been discussed, analyzed and framed with the help of a languacultural expert (i.e. their teacher)” (O’Dowd, 2016 p.07).

2.2.3.2. Theoretical Background

Telecollaborative learning is built upon the theory of social constructivism or sociocultural learning theory of Vygotsky (Dooly, 2007), and its educational ideas are shown in ‘communities of practice’ (Jordan et. al. 2008). The sociocultural theory

proposes that humans attain the capacity to voluntarily control or regulate their memory, attention, perception, planning, learning, and development, as they appropriate mediating artifacts, including language, as they are brought into culturally specified and organized activities (Lantolf, 2005 p. 335)

In other words, cognitive development and knowledge is constructed through social interaction not transferred from teachers to learners. For that, online foreign language education includes public discussion and collaborations with other classmates and tutors dealing with different subjects, rather than publishing lectures and class notes only (Dolly, 2007).

For Vygotsky, learning is an “assisted performance, whereas development is the ability to regulate mental and social activity as a consequence of having appropriated, or internalized, that assistance” (Lantolf, 2005 p. 336). Vygotsky’s idea of assisted learning or scaffolding i.e. to learn in collaboration with adults or more capable peers was recently extended to include “collaboration with the equal peers” (Dooly, 2007 p. 216) where learners support each other, and share resources that help them in the learning process. This idea is reflected in telecollaboration since the latter requires groups of students to work together on different tasks, to attain a common goal. It combines both ‘group goals’

and 'individual accountability' i.e. members of the group share with the others the knowledge they have learned to help achieve the group goals (Dooly, 2007).

Furthermore, Vygotsky's theory holds that collaborative learning helps learners to intellectually perform better, especially if there is a diversity within the group members because "different interpretations, explanations or conceptualizations about what they are studying[...] force them to 're-think' their own viewpoints" (Dooly, 2007 p.215). Hence, telecollaborative learning represents a rich atmosphere for exchanging viewpoints, and rethinking ideas.

The need to explain processes of interaction among groups led Lave and Wenger (1992) to propose the concept of community of practice which is defined as a 'social construct' where "an aggregate of people who come together around mutual engagement in an endeavour [...] practices emerge in the course of this mutual endeavour" (Eckhart & McConnell-Ginet, 1992 cited in Mitchell & Myles, 2004 p. 241). A community of practice has three main features: (1) mutual engagement of members, (2) members' jointly negotiated enterprise, and (3) members' shared repertoire. However, different members, be they core or peripheral members, have different access to the repertoire as they engage in the joint enterprise in different degrees (Mitchell & Myles, 2004; Corder and Meyerhoff, 2007).

The concept of communities of practice focuses on the mutual engagement and constructive nature of individuals and groups. The latter, however, can also take place online or through text messaging (Cordes & Meyerhoff, 2007). In communities of practice, individuals can actively create and share knowledge, and knowledge is always 'situated', not necessarily within a specific location, but always within a culture and a background. Knowledge is not always pre-existing, but constructed from the practices of the group (Jordan et.al, 2008). Hence learning is socially situated and is affected by participation in

communities of practice i.e. established relations within the community determine available learning possibilities (Mitchell & Myles, 2004). Within this view, Byram (1997) pointed out that learners' view of themselves as social actors, not imitators of native speakers, and interlocutors' different roles, but with equal power and significance, are the advantages of an educational approach that focuses on social interaction.

2.2.3.3. Historical Background

O'Dowd (2011) divided the development of telecollaborative research into three main phases. The first early phase is traced back to the work of Célestin Freinet in the 1920s in France and Mario Lodi in the 1960s in Italy. However, their work was restricted to distant students' exchange of newspapers through which they describe their cultures to each other (schools within the same country). The use of the Minitel, in March 1986, for the first international connection could be also attributed to this phase. "The Minitel is often considered as the ancestor of the Internet. Initiated in France in 1982, the Minitel is an online service made accessible through telephone lines provided by *Post, Téléphone et Télécommunication*" (LeBaron-Earle, 2013 p. 54). The experience linked students in France, Italy, and Portugal in order to write a fictitious tale, it allowed participants to read authentic messages written by native speakers and loaded with cultural aspects related to the TL. Although the use of the Minitel was restricted to this experience, it allowed intercultural exchange between participants and helped in highlighting important issues related to the use of media in education (LeBaron-Earle, 2013).

The second phase is signalled by the emergence of the Internet in the early 1990s. More intercultural exchange took place and gained interest of educators, but complex and structured online projects and tasks were not found till the late 1990s. The term telecollaboration became well known with Warschauer's (1996) publication

“telecollaboration and the language learner” (O’Dowd, 2015). Since then, many telecollaboration programs and models have been developed like e-tandem, cultura, e-twinning and the connect program (O’Dowd, 2007).

Recently, a more flexible and adaptable model of telecollaborative exchange emerged. Telecollaboration 2.0 (Guth & Helm, 2010 cited in O’Dowd, 2011) is based on the social web as blogging and social networking sites, it “is characterized by a less text-based and more multi model form of communication [...] is more classroom independent” (O’Dowd 2011, p 354). Within this model, establishing contact with partner classes is not necessary, rather learners are free to select their intercultural partners, and they assume responsibility for their own intercultural learning. Echoing this idea Thorne (2010) stated that this model “present interesting, and perhaps even compelling, opportunities for intercultural exchange, agentive action and meaning making” (cited in O’Dowd, 2011 p.354). Nevertheless, the negotiation of this experience in class under the teacher guidance is crucial for intercultural learning.

2.2.3.4. Advantages of Telecollaboration

Telecollaboration gives learners greater opportunities to interact with each other compared with class interaction limited by time constraints, with native speakers, as well as other speakers of the language. Telecollaborative exchange would allow for raising learners’ awareness of the sociocultural knowledge; the latter is different or cannot be found in textbooks or other teaching materials (O’Dowd, 2013). Hence, In addition to learning about language sociocultural features, learners can benefit from direct experience with foreign peers and their viewpoints in selecting aspects of foreign culture (Byram, 1991). As a result, unjustified generalizations can be avoided (Keller, 1991).

Telecollaborative learning is claimed to develop learners' critical cultural awareness and pragmatic competence. Through the use of tasks that aim at comparing the two cultures, telecollaboration allows meaning negotiation, and thus, raising learners' 'critical cultural awareness'. Interaction with native peers facilitates the exposure to different and broad range of FL discourse options, and therefore, telecollaboration is argued to develop learners' pragmatic competence (O'Dowd, 2013). Moreover, virtual mobility provided by telecollaboration can support and facilitate future physical mobility (Guth et.al., 2012).

The nature of the communication tools used in telecollaboration allows for different forms of communication, be they oral or written, synchronous or asynchronous. The text-based tools provide learners with opportunities to notice L2 structures which would help them increase accuracy and language proficiency since they can use them in other contexts. The asynchronous nature of other tools provides more time to read, reread and understand their partners' perspectives and language input (O'Dowd, 2013).

2.2.3.5. Shortcomings of Telecollaboration

Most of the time teachers downplay learners' frustrations that can be caused by technical difficulties, lack of effective advice, or anxiety. When learners are not comfortable with the project or tools, they will not benefit much (O'Dowd, 2007). They devote their attention to technical problems rather than negotiation of social and cultural meanings (Malinowski & Kramsch, 2014). O'Dowd (2007) opposed the view that CMC increased participation of learners mainly because they feel comfortable since their real identities are hidden. He argued that hiding one's self or cultural identity in online interaction will never lead to developing cultural awareness or ICC. O'Dowd (2007, p. 29) explained that:

presenting online communication as an Utopian middle landscape, unfettered by historical, geographical, national or institutional identities is [...] inaccurate, unrealistic and fails to exploit the medium to its full potential .

Literature on telecollaboration revealed that not all exchanges were successful; some cases resulted in misunderstandings and negative attitudes towards the partners and their culture. This failure is due to different reasons; first, the existence of different course demands and varying levels of access to technology; second, not sensitizing learners to institutional and cultural differences before the exchange, and preparing them to be tolerant and open-minded; third, the existence of individual differences in motivation and the use of different cultural communication genres and styles in online intercultural interactions (O'Dowd, 2011); and last, the existence of stereotypes and negative attitudes towards the other (O'Dowd, 2015).

Belz (2007) questioned the transferability of the acquired ICC to other cultures while interacting with keypals. She gave, as an illustration, the example of American-German partners who showed an ICC development and decentering, but not towards marriage with Muslims (because of the way they treat women).

2.2.3.6. Designing a Telecollaborative Project

The design of telecollaborative learning includes finding out partners, the selection of the tool, and the design of the tasks. Finding out collaborating partners may take place through personal communication, or through some online platforms as google (+), www.uni-collaboration.eu (O'Dowd, 2015, Edelstein, 2015) and others (cf. müller-hartmann, 2007 p. 174).

The chosen tool should be selected in a way that suits learners' and teachers' learning process, not the opposite, because "new technologies and telecollaboration is not a cure –all, nor can telecollaboration be perceived as a one-size-fits all effort" (Dooly, 2007 p. 214). To decide about a tool the teacher should decide about the possible way of delivery in the institution that suits learners' levels and interest. *Synchronous delivery* means that participating learners can interact with each other and do the designed tasks at the same time. It "requires having a pre-set time for interaction for the students and enough computer terminals and bandwidth to keep interruptions of exchanges to a minimum" (Dooly, 2007 p. 218). *Asynchronous delivery* means that participating learners leave messages for their partners to get access to at any later time. It "may be the best option for autonomous pair work, for extensive reading or writing activities and for attending to questions, concerns and long debates" (Dooly, 2007 p. 218).

Comparing between the two modes of delivery, Sotillo (2000) found that learners who communicate synchronously are more concerned with meaning and content while accuracy is more cared for by learners communicating asynchronously (cited in O'Dowd, 2007). Hence, Teachers can select one mode of delivery or both (Dooly, 2007), but their decisions should be better based on a needs analysis which enables them to find out what learners are familiar or comfortable with, together with the institutional constraints that may hinder the use of some tools (e.g. computer rooms and the Internet).

Although the selection of the tool is of paramount importance, the benefits gained from telecollaboration depend more on the extent to which the designed tasks are suitable (Dooly, 2007). A task is defined as "a meaning-centered activity that is based on learners' communicative needs and related to the real world" (O'Dowd & Waire, 2009 p. 174). Besides its focus on meaning and real world relationship, a task is used by teachers as a

unit of planning to provide information and challenging activities that learners should be involved in and should complete through processing information and language, using some strategies, and benefiting from immediate feedback . In sum, a task should focus on meaning, completeness, real world relationship, and should have pedagogical objectives to provide clear guidelines to assess learners' achievement (Hamada, 2007). Therefore, O'Dowd (2016) divided telecollaborative approaches into strong and weak based on task design, as shown in the following table:

Table 06.

Strong and weak approaches to telecollaborative task design.

Strong approaches to telecollaborative task design	Weak approaches to telecollaborative task design
- tasks reflect themes of social justice and intercultural citizenship	- tasks focus on superficial communication themes
-tasks engage students in active collaboration together	- tasks only require learners to present and report information.
- tasks include reflection on the role of the medium in online communication	- the role of the technology in the communication is taken for granted.
-tasks include stages of cultural self reflection and critical evaluation	- no critical self-reflection is involved
- tasks avoid stereotyping and forced culture clash	- tasks often involve a focus on stereotyping and forced culture clash

Source. O'Dowd, 2016 p. 13 .

O'Dowd and Waire (2009, pp 175- 178) classified telecollaborative tasks into three main categories:

1/ Information exchange; It includes four types of tasks: 1) authoring 'cultural autobiographies', 2) carrying out virtual interviews, 3) engaging in informal discussion, and 4) exchanging story collections. Learners are required to introduce themselves and their culture through autobiographies, interview their partners to prepare class presentations as a particular cultural theme, discuss general themes with partners guided by general questions, and collect and exchange historical events and stories. These tasks can be used in an introductory phase when learners are not familiar with their partners yet, as they can be used in other phases to develop skills of discovery and interaction.

2/ Comparison and Analysis; this category embodies four types of tasks: 1) comparing parallel texts, 2) comparing class questionnaires, 3) analyzing cultural products, and 4) translating. Learners are required to compare and analyze parallel literary products that share a common theme; answer, compare responses to class questionnaires, and discuss them online; analyze and discuss cultural product; and translate L2 texts to be referred and corrected by the partner. These tasks demand a critical analysis and explanation of particular linguistic meanings or cultural products and practices. This leads to dialogue and establishment of similarities and differences between cultures.

3/ Collaboration and product creation; It entails four types of tasks: 1) collaborating on product creation, 2) transforming text genres, 3) carrying out 'closed outcome' discussions, and making cultural translations/ adaptations. Learners are required to work together with the partner to produce a product (e.g. essay); write texts in different genres with the help of the partner; share and compare information to accomplish an activity; and work collaboratively to produce an appropriate translation of a product (e.g. film). These tasks trigger learners to negotiate meaning –linguistic and cultural- to come at making a joint product.

In telecollaboration, a combination of the task type is beneficial but necessitates a careful sequencing. O'Dowd & Waire (2009) argued for three stages/phases. The first is introductory in which learners represent themselves and cultures to get familiar with the partner. The second phase is comparative in the sense that learners are required to establish similarities and differences between the native and the target culture. The final phase, the production of a piece of work requires learners to negotiate meaning and to reflect critically.

However, O'Dowd (2016) reported that most telecollaborative projects have dealt with the two first types rather than the third which, in his view, is the most important. Based on the work of the social psychologist Allport (1958), O'Dowd (2016) argued that establishing contact and interaction between culturally distant groups is not enough to develop ICC, but these groups need to work together to accomplish tasks and pursue common goals. He contended also that the topic of discussion should be deep (e.g. social justice, political significance, religion...) to allow critical comparison, thinking and understanding of the other, to attain an authentic exchange, and avoid superficial manifestations.

Similarly, Müller-Hartmann (2007), relying on Numan's (2004) definition and components of tasks, and Willis (1996) conceptualization of sequencing tasks, suggested a methodology for telecollaboration. The first phase includes establishing contacts where learners and partners introduce themselves and get familiar with each other; this phase should be preceded by a careful preparation of learners. The second phase shifts to the establishment of dialogues followed by a critical reflection or what has been mentioned in the dialogues.

2.2.3.7. Teachers' Role

Generally, in intercultural pedagogy teachers' role is that of mediators, they should help students learn both the target language and culture at the same time (Afrim, 2013). For the fulfilment of this role and making discussions and communication in class possible, Clouet (2006) argued that bilingual teachers are more suitable than monolingual/monocultural teachers. She maintained that teachers should:

- Provide the opportunity to learners to compare and contrast their own culture with others, not necessarily the British or the American, because communication can take place with either native or non-native speakers.
- Help learners avoid generating stereotypes through discussions and critical examination of cultural aspects in class. These stereotypes can be the result of T.V serials/ films as can be the result of teaching materials/textbooks.
- Be familiar and make their learners familiar with some aspects of culture like intonation patterns, body language, taboos, register...
- Help learners develop cultural awareness besides the linguistic competence.

The last role emphasized developing learners' cultural awareness, the latter involves "a gradually developing inner sense of the equality of cultures, an increased understanding of your own and other people's cultures, and a positive interest in how cultures both connect and differ" (Tomalin, 2001 cited in Ho 2009 p. 66). Hence, cultural awareness encompasses three qualities; awareness of one's own culturally-induced behavior, awareness of the culturally-induced behaviour of the other, and the ability to explain one's own cultural stand point (Tomalin & Stempleski, 1993 p. 05). To develop cultural awareness, Tomalin (2009) posited a four phases learning cycle:

- 1/ activity: learners do something to raise cultural awareness.
- 2/ Debrief: they discuss and interact on what they did, learned and how they felt about the experience.
- 3/ Conclusion: learners reflect on what has been learned, and draw conclusions and expectations for future change in behaviour
- 4/ Implementation: they think of future implementation for what has been learned

Byram (2008) argued that teachers should develop in their learners a 'critical cultural awareness' (*savoir s'engager*). But before, teachers should themselves be able to question the pre-supposed assumptions, values, beliefs and behaviours within their own society and those of others, and eventually develop that of their students. He added that teachers' role expanded to that of 'transformative intellectuals' i.e. they should bring some change and reform to the society.

Although the teachers' role was primarily underestimated because of the focus on learners' autonomy using the new media, it has recently gained much attention and focus. This view is supported by Müller-Hartmann (2007) who stated that

the new technology did not replace the teacher, but put him in the midst of designing the new living environment, allowing him to develop professionally, conjointly with his partner teacher(s) abroad, in the process of these intercultural projects

(Müller-Hartmann , 2007 p. 168)

Because of the continuously emerging and developing ICTs, and because the use of technology in education cannot be effective unless teachers are aware of their new roles (Kramersch, 1993), teachers are required to develop some skills. The latter are manifested in four main models as shown in the following table:

Table 07.

Models of ICT competence for teachers.

Skills pyramid for successful online teaching Hempel and Stickler (2005)	Technology standards performance indicators for teachers (2008)	ICT standards for teachers (2008)	competency UNISCO (2008)	E-moderator competencies (2003)
- basic ICT competence	- facilitating and inspiring student learning	- educational policy	- curriculum and assessment	- understanding of online processes
- tech competence with software	- designing digital-age learning experiences and assessments	- ICT (technical) competence	- pedagogy	- technical skills
- dealing with constraints of the medium	- model digital-age work and learning	- organization and administration	- ICT (technical) competence	- online communication skills
- online socialization	- promote digital citizenship and responsibility	- teacher professional development	- organization and administration	- content expertise
- facilitating communicative competence	- engage in professional growth and leadership	- teacher professional development	- organization and administration	- personal characteristics
- creativity and choice	- engage in professional growth and leadership	- teacher professional development	- organization and administration	- personal characteristics
- own style	- engage in professional growth and leadership	- teacher professional development	- organization and administration	- personal characteristics

Source. O'Dowd, 2013 p.05.

In addition to these ICT skills, O'Dowd (2013) claimed that telecollaborative teachers should 1) aim at developing ICC, 2) be themselves interculturally competent to be able to collaborate with other teachers within the project, and 3) relate telecollaborative tasks to those tackled in class during a long-term period. He suggested a model of telecollaborative teachers' competences that contains four sections: organizational, pedagogical, digital competences and attitudes and beliefs, with a total of 40 descriptors. To develop these competencies, O'Dowd (2015) valued sociocultural approaches to FL teacher education where emphasis is put on the relation between training periods at university and realities of language classrooms.

Nevertheless, teachers may be afraid of their new roles in telecollaboration because of the pitfalls of technology, changing the role they have accustomed to, and not being able to control their learners online (Müller-Hartmann, 2007). However, teachers' role does not require them to control their learners, and their active participation within online interaction is not necessary. Hence, their role encompasses the organization of the exchange (selecting the partners, the tool and preparing learners), developing, sequencing and implementing real-world tasks that are meaningful (following a task-based approach), setting objectives and time constraints, and evaluating the learning outcome (O'Dowd, 2013; Müller-Hartmann, 2007; O'Dowd, 2015).

In preparing learners, teachers should make sure that learners are not frustrated by the use of a particular ICT tool (Dooly, 2007). 'Electronic literacies' i.e. skills related to computer use, connectively and knowledge about online behaviour should be considered to guarantee learners' benefit from online language learning (O'Dowd, 2007). Besides, learners should be sensitized towards differences that may occur in their online interactions and may lead to misunderstanding and stereotypes (O'Dowd, 2015).

To fulfill these new roles, Müller-Hartmann (2007) emphasized the paramount importance of teacher education. In other words, teachers cannot help their learners unless they have developed their own competencies, be they electronic literacies or ICC.

Section Three: Facebook

Since the number of emerging ICT tools is huge, it is beyond the scope of this study to review them all. Henceforth, this section highlights the use of the social network site (SNS) Facebook because its implementation is the focus of this research. It starts with the presentation of social media in general to move to the presentation of Facebook with its use, and its implementation in educational settings.

2.3.1. Social Media

The World Wide Web, or the Internet, was first created in 1990 for the management of the US army. However, in the last twenty years, it has been widely used by civilians for communication and learning (Naizabekov, 2012). Social media are considered to be the most important outcome of the technology of web2.0. They are interactive social platforms through which people establish communities to share knowledge, experiences and everyday life interests (Çetinkaya et.al. 2014). People use Social Media to establish relationships with peers, colleagues or groups in order to profit and be more effective. Hence, individuals can move from one community of publishers to another if they feel uncomfortable or unsatisfied (Blossom, 2009). Mayfield (2008) outlined five characteristics of social media:

- 1) Participation; every one interested can contribute.
- 2) Openness; open to freely added comments and feedback.
- 3) Conversation; it is a two way conversation in contrast to old media.

- 4) Community; communities can be formed quickly to share interests.
- 5) Connectedness; the usability of other websites and resources (Mayfield, 2008 p. 05).

Social networks include Blogs which are online journals; Wikis or online encyclopedias like Wikipedia; Podcasts that represent audio and video files; Forums refer to online communities that discuss online different topics; Content communities which are platforms to organize and share content like You Tube, and Microblogging through which only small amounts of content are distributed online as in Twitter (Mayfield, 2008).

Blossom (2009) identified seven secrets for Social Media:

- It is all about the ability of people to scale their influence.
- Technology matters within it, but not as much as understanding what people are looking for to influence others and to be influenced.
- It is not about the law of the jungle, but the law of the campfire; both values and individuals enforcing them matter.
- Its value is gained from its ability to create influential contexts for content sharing.
- Its goal is the creation, aggregation, and mass contextualization of constantly renewable and useful content.
- It provides opportunities of creating content and sharing values with others.
- Its influence is variant and cannot be predicted, but its value benefits more from active and initiative persons.

He contended that social media play a significant role in educating people both formally and informally. Without seeking to replace instructors, social media “is changing people from being passive vessels into which knowledge is poured into active creators and distributors of knowledge” (Blossom, 2009 p. 233). Besides, learners use it to share and

create their learning experiences i.e. it provides a space where learners can collaborate while studying a subject, and share their findings.

2.3.2. A Presentation of Facebook

Facebook (FB) is a publishing platform that provides people with opportunities to set up pages to share aspects of the social life, express their insights, and interact and communicate with others both to improve their lives and to influence others (Blossom, 2009). It is a social media service that may function as a tool for:

- Personal publishing like Twitter,
- social network publishing; it enables people to initiate relationships with others to share information, needs and interests,
- feedback and discussions; it enables its users to provide or receive comments, insights or opinions to gain knowledge about a given topic or product,
- aggregation and filtering; it enables its users to gather content from other resources and use it to provide insights,
- widgets and mashups; it encourages individuals to engage on a personal level by adding value to its content through providing additional one,
- personal markets and marketing; it enables individuals to easily find people interested in offers be they content, products or services without intermediaries (Blossom, 2009).

Petrović et.al. (2012) summarized the features that Facebook provides for its users stating that

Facebook allows each user to create a profile, updating it with personal information such as home address, mobile phone number, interests, religious views, and even data like relationship status. In addition to creating individual profiles,

Facebook users can also designate other users as friends, send private messages, join groups, post and/or tag pictures and leave comments on these pictures as well as on either a group's or an individual's wall (Petrović et.al., 2012 p. 356)

In other words, the profile is the core of FB. It is used to add or edit personal information, view and/or comment on others' profiles, and to interact with friends. The profile's basic elements are the picture, news feed (the so labeled 'the wall'), background information, boxes and uploaded photos. Friendship, as another FB component, requires sending a request from one side to be accepted, ignored or rejected by the other. McBride (2009) manifested that FB is much more used to reinforce already established offline relationships than to establish new contacts. Becoming friends means being able to see and share content. Other features include groups, games and ads.

Nowadays, FB is one of the most popular social network sites among youth, and mainly university students. It was first designed in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg for Harvard College/ US students, then spread quickly to be used in other institutions (Peterović et.al. 2012). Later on, it expanded to the public use and became "both a basic tool for and a mirror of social interaction, personal identity and network building among students" (Debatin et.al. 2009 p 83). By 2010, FB users' number reached 500 million, using it as one of their daily life activities.

2.3.3. Facebook in Educational Settings

Although the utility of FB in education was not investigated until recently, compared with other SNS such as blogs and wikis, research results (Debatin et.al. 2009; Jin, 2015; Peterović et.al. 2012) showed that FB can be used successfully in educational settings. It can be used as a tool to improve writing, to motivate learners and increase their

engagement in the learning tasks, to provide authentic teaching material, to increase vocabulary learning and reading comprehension, and to develop learners' ICC.

These findings are supported by theories of learning including incidental learning, socially situated learning, and the social theory/ constructivism (Kabilan et.al. 2010). Incidental learning refers to that type of learning which may take place unintentionally while learners are trying to do the learning tasks. In this vein, studies revealed that students spend much time learning informally through peer interaction, correction and feedback than formally with their teachers (Peterović et.al. 2012). Incidental learning occurs as a result of observing, repeating, participating, interacting with others, discussing, searching for new information, and problem solving. The outcome of incidental learning in online situations is likely to appear in the ability to filter information and analyze critically its resources, together with effective online communication. However, using FB, learners should give more focus and attention to the learning aspects, rather than to socialization.

Socially-situated learning refers to the integration of social spaces –in this case FB- where knowledge construction and learning take place naturally, i.e. language is used to communicate in naturalistic settings. The social theory put focus on the individuals' participation in communities where opportunities of meaning negotiation, mutual engagement, and identity construction are found. In a community, there should be

- (1) mutual engagement of individuals in actions where meanings are negotiated;
- (2) negotiation of a joint enterprise that reflects mutual engagement, active participation and mutual accountability; and
- (3) shared repertoire that includes routines, words, stories, gestures, genres, and actions, among others

(Kabilan et.al. 2010 p 03)

All these characteristics are found in FB and practised by its users. Since the latter represents a community of practice among which inter-personal relationships can be developed, practices and experiences can be shared, and hence, knowledge can be constructed. Therefore, constructivism is applicable and relevant to FB (Kabilan et.al. 2010).

FB is recommended in education especially in the field of language teaching and learning because of the interactive nature of language, and because it is beneficial for both learners and teachers. For learners, the use of FB in learning allows for an easy and quick interaction, collaboration, active participation, resource sharing, and increasing socio-experiential opportunities. As a result, FB fosters learners' positive relationships with both their colleagues and their teachers, encourages knowledge transfer through involving learners in various learning tasks, and helps them to develop positive attitudes towards learning, besides enhancing interpersonal intelligence and critical thinking (Peterović et.al. 2012). Furthermore, it represents a platform for authentic interaction and communication that raises learners' motivation, from one hand, and provides teachers with opportunities to construct and practice a pedagogy that is based on learners' interests. Teachers would use FB as a tool to evaluate their learners formatively, to change attitudes and behaviours accepting learners as partners and allowing them to learn by themselves rather than through lecturing, and to establish efficient educational relationships that would help in developing new skills and knowledge (Peterović et.al. 2012).

However, the quick wide spread of FB is due to school and university students' usage, therefore, some researchers warned against its negative effects on learners' performance. Multitasking is one of the problems related to the extensive use of FB. It refers to the learners' potential to carry out several tasks at the same time; they write

messages, search on the net, watch pictures and videos, and play games... at the same time. Learners use FB while doing their homework which would result in a lack of attention and concentration, and thus, decreases their academic performance and achievement. Attention is not the only aspect facing risk, but also learners waste and overuse time on FB which affects negatively their ability to finish their tasks on time. In other words, frequent users of FB would lack the skill of time management which may cause cheating, plagiarism, and procrastination. The latter refers to the learners' inability to start and complete learning tasks on the predetermined time, and their tendency to postpone them. Instead of doing their academic homework or research project, FB users spend their time visiting their pages on FB doing non academic tasks. Eventually, learners lose their motivation in learning. Furthermore, FB was criticized for the privacy concerns and threats that it poses for its users, from one hand, and for encouraging negative attitudes as addiction and lying, from the other (Debatin et.al. 2009; Kabilan et.al. 2010; Naizabekov, 2012).

A close consideration of these limitations would reveal that problems of the lack of attention, motivation and procrastination are the result of separating the learning tasks from learners' social experience and interest (FB), and that the link between these two would result in raising learners' interest and motivation, from one side, and visiting FB to learn and do tasks at the same time. McBride (2009, p. 35) concurred this view stating that "If language learners become similarly involved with SNS activities containing pedagogically useful FL experiences, they might become more motivated and spend more time on the FL tasks". Furthermore, Sherman (2011) opposed the view that criticized FB for causing addiction arguing that personality traits of individuals – mainly Neuroticism vs. extroversion-, gender, procrastination, boredom and values are factors that influence, and make individuals more likely FB addicts. Therefore, teachers need to stress the

usefulness of FB as an educational tool for their learners through clarifying the objectives and the outcomes of the projects that they are expected to be involved in using FB. Consequently, learners will be able to “(1) increase their competencies, (2) increase their self-knowledge, (3) value life-long learning, (4) improve their life skills, and (5) develop self-confidence” (Kabilan et.al. 2010 p.07).

Hence, instead of asking learners to stop using Facebook or to learn how to manage time, it would be useful if the two are linked. Besides, learners doing their homework or studying alone at home may feel bored and tired, a case where they could not learn effectively and appropriately; they need to use some affective strategies to arouse their energy and motivation. The use of FB would decrease their stress; they can talk to friends about their feelings and difficulties, play games, and post or read insights about success and continuity.

2.3.4. Implementing Facebook

Students these days, or the so called ‘The Net Generation’ (McBride, 2009 p.37) are surrounded by a variety of technologies, and they have different SNS profiles. McBride (2009) claimed that this Net generation has different thought patterns, different learning styles, and different socializing habits. In sum, they have a different life style than the old generations. As a consequence, a reconsideration and adaptation of their teaching methods is necessary i.e. class practices should be adapted to those practices they are familiar with.

The vast majority of university teachers and learners frequently use FB in their everyday life for diverse purposes. Yet, they vary in their stances towards its utility in formal education. Teachers may find the implementation of Social Media in general and FB in particular difficult because they have limited time and freedom. In other words, teachers have an already designed curriculum that should be followed, they have to

coordinate with other colleagues working on the same syllabus to achieve the curriculum goals and to prepare learners for predetermined future courses, they are restrained by institutional recommendations and available material, and thus, neither time nor space are found for the design and implementation of further activities. Besides, if students have accessibility to their teachers' FB profile, teachers would feel a decrease in authority and a privacy risk. Furthermore, the implementation of FB in class is more likely to be resisted by teachers in support of the traditional classes, be they traditional or newly graduated teachers, because they do not use or believe in the use of FB, or they use it in their everyday life but they do not know how to implement it in class i.e. they did not receive any training concerning the implementation of new technologies in education when they were students (McBride, 2009).

In the case of learners, research in the field reported contrasting findings. While some results revealed learners' willingness and readiness to use FB in class as an academic tool, others showed that learners welcome the use of FB but as a support for their work in class i.e. as an additional tool for conventional teaching. However, other results indicated that learners do not prefer the use of FB in their classes to avoid mixing private and educational life (Ophus & Abbitt, 2009; Irwin et.al., 2012).

These variant researches investigated the attitudes of teachers and learners towards the use of FB in education in different places in the world, therefore, it can be claimed that these attitudes vary from one place to another; they are affected by the values, personality traits, etc. This fact necessitates further research to investigate teachers' and learners' attitudes towards the use of FB in education in different places throughout the world, on the one hand, as it necessitates experimental research that would test these attitudes before

and after the implementation of FB; whether there would be a change or a reinforcement of these attitudes, on the other hand.

Conclusion

This second chapter has been divided into three main sections. The first section has dealt with the intercultural pedagogy, in general. It has attempted to cover the elements of definition, aims, methods, teaching and assessment. The presentation of I.P served to pave the way for more particular descriptions of one of its recent approaches; the internet mediated intercultural pedagogy. The second section has described telecollaborative learning be it a part of internet-mediated intercultural pedagogy. However, the tools used in the telecollaborative projects vary from one context or research to the other, as it is difficult to provide a description for all the tools that could be used. Henceforth, the third section has focused on one social media tool 'Facebook' since it is the tool used in the present study.

The development of learners' ICC is inevitably accepted in the field of language teaching and learning. To achieve such a goal, intercultural pedagogy is suggested with a number of techniques and methods. Telecollaboration is the most recent method that is assumed to be efficient and in which a number of online tools can be used, and Facebook is one of these tools. Although FB raised disagreement between researchers and different attitudes among teachers and learners, it is worth to be investigated in the context of the Algerian university. Details regarding its implementation in the present study are discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology

Introduction

After reviewing briefly the literature related to the subject matter of the present study, this chapter aims to manifest the selected operational definition of ICC, and provides a detailed description of the research project including its rationale, the participants and their partners in the project, the chosen tool for the telecollaboration and the reason behind its selection, then the procedure followed in designing and posting tasks. The significance of the study is clarified through comparing it to worldwide research in the field and research in Algeria. The methodology followed to collect and analyse data is also considered; the use of a triangulation of three research tools was an attempt to collect more reliable data. The overall design that shaped the current study was first piloted, in the first semester of the academic year 2016-2017, and resulted in some insights that were taken into consideration later in the study. Henceforth, a brief description of the pilot study addressing its duration, the tasks used and the results is provided.

3.1. The Operational Definition

In this research, the adopted operational definition is that of Byram (1997) since the results of research in the field of intercultural research revealed that it is the highest rated definition (M= 3.5 in a 4 point scale ranging from 4= highly applicable to 1= not applicable)(Griffith et.al.,2016). Furthermore, O'Dowd (2006) reported that Byram's model (1997) is the most used in foreign language studies generally, and in telecollaboration particularly because it offers an operational definition, and the teaching and assessment objectives that are relevant to the context.

On the basis of Byram's definition, Barrett, Byram, Làzàr, Mompoin-Gaillard & Philippon, (2013 pp. 09- 10) provided a detailed list to manifest four components of ICC: attitudes, knowledge and understanding, skills and actions.

The component of attitudes includes the ability to:

- Value and respect cultural diversity;
- be open to and curious to learn about people who have different cultural affiliations;
- question what is taken for granted as 'normal';
- tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty;
- seek out opportunities to engage and cooperate with others with different affiliations.

The knowledge and understanding include the ability to:

- recognize the internal diversity of all cultural groups;
- understand and be aware of one's own and other's assumptions, perceptions, stereotypes, prejudices, and overt and covert discrimination;
- understand the influence of one's and other's language and culture on life experience;
- develop communicative awareness, i.e. others may express the same ideas similarly or differently depending on the conventions available in both their language and culture;
- develop cultural knowledge related to others' beliefs, values, practices, discourses and products;
- understand interaction processes be they cultural, societal or individual.

The skills include the ability to:

- decentre from one's own perspective;

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- discover information about the different others;
- interpret others' practices, beliefs and values and relate them to one's own;
- show empathy i.e. understanding others' thoughts, beliefs, values and feelings;
- be cognitively flexible, adapting one's way of thinking to situations;
- explain one's views and critically evaluate and judge one's and others' beliefs, values, practices, discourses and products;
- adapt one's behaviour to different cultural situations;
- develop linguistic and sociolinguistic skills;
- use plurilingualism skills to achieve intercomprehension;
- act as mediator.

The actions include the ability to:

- seek opportunities to engage with people who have different cultural affiliations;
- interact and communicate appropriately, effectively and respectfully with the different others;
- cooperate, share, and discuss with others from different cultures different perspectives to build common ones;
- challenge attitudes and behaviours that encourage discrimination, and defend human rights regardless of cultural affiliations.

Henceforth, the present study has adopted the ICC definition developed by Barrett et.al. (2013), and the overall ICC is evaluated using the different abilities and skills described above.

3.2. Research Project

The presentation of the research project covers a detailed description of its design, the rationale upon which it is built, the telecollaborative partner together with the SNS communication tool used to connect the participants, in addition to the procedure of the course. Last but not least, the significance of this research is shown.

3.2.1. Design of the Project

The present study followed a blended learning approach. The latter was defined as “learning that combines online activity with more traditional periods of face-to-face contact and classroom interaction” (O’Dowd, 2007 p. 18). It was a telecollaborative one; learners interact with other users of English (EFL learners) using SNS –Facebook-. It is carried out with ‘master one’ EFL students from the department of Letters and the English language at the university of Mahammed Seddik Ben Yahia/ Jijel. They interacted with a class of Brazilian EFL learners, and a group of Algerian learners who gained a scholarship to England. In this telecollaborative project designed for the purpose of this current study, the Algerian learners interacted with the Brazilian ones using a Facebook group outside the class, then provided feedback and reflected on their experience in class discussions within the confines of a module called ‘*Pratiques Communicationnels*’.

Moreover, this study is an action research. Wallace (1998 p. 01) defined action research as “the systematic collection and analysis of data relating to the improvement of some aspects of professional practice”. Such kind of research is popular in educational settings, and it has some key features. It is conducted by researchers who are involved in the study with the aim of improving the participants’ practice through planning, action, observation, evaluation and reflection, and feedback. It has a collaborative nature, and it applies eclectic methodology as it frequently uses case studies (Cohen, 2005). However,

generalizing the obtained findings is not a major concern of action research (Wallace, 1998). Consequently, this present study adheres to action research methodology where the researcher is involved in a process of planning, acting, observing and reflecting. It aims at developing the ICC of 'Master One' EFL learners at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia/ Jijel through collaborating with a group of Algerian learners who gained a scholarship to England , on the one hand, and collaborating with the Brazilians, on the other hand.

'Master One' EFL learners' at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia/ Jijel interacted and communicated with distant partners using the SNS Facebook. Therefore, a Facebook Group named 'Cross Cultural Critical Thinkers' was created beforehand through which learners can comment and discuss different topics under the supervision of the their teachers (the researcher and the Brazilian teacher – Stephan Hughes), they had also the opportunity to chat synchronously and asynchronously. This project took place during the academic year 2016-2017. As it aimed only to develop the ICC of 'Master One' EFL learners' at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia/ Jijel, , the other partners' ICC (the Brazilian and the Algerian learners abroad) were not tested. It ran through more than three months, from mid-January to the end of April, including Spring holidays. In other words, although there were no classes during the holidays, the online tasks were launched regularly, and reflection in class was reported to the weeks that followed the holidays.

3.2.2. Rationale of the Project

Although most researchers in the field of FLT/L claimed that the classroom is an insufficient environment for ICC enhancement (Belz,2007), others argued that contact with the other cultures is not enough too because learners need skills of mediation between

cultures, skills of motivation and willingness, and skills to help them deal with the third place. Hence, a combination of classroom and outside classroom work is necessary. Byram (1997) posited that ICC is better developed in three settings:

- a- In the classroom where learners acquire cultural knowledge together with the skills of interpreting and relating.
- b- Via field work outside the classroom.
- c- By means of independent learning where learners develop their skills of interaction.

Accordingly, Gudy Kunst and Hammer (1983) distinguished four types of training:

- 1- Experiential culture-general training; which is based on an experiential approach to prepare participants encounter other cultures in general.
- 2- Experiential culture-specific training; which is based on an experiential approach to prepare participants encounter a specific individual culture.
- 3- Didactic culture-general training; which is based on the presentation of information about different cultures.
- 4- Didactic culture-specific training ; which is based on the presentation of information about a particular culture (cited in Rost-Roth, 2007).

In this sense, Dai (2011 p.1034) explained that “the best one of cultural learning approaches is to encourage an interactional, experiential learning concerned with the learners’ own interest”, and which paves the way for the following skills to be built up :

- the ability to make personal and inter-textual connections which increase the depth of learning.
- the ability to be autonomous in making different learning decisions and evaluation (in group work).

- the ability to develop reading ability and using it in different meaningful communications.
- the ability to develop the understanding of literature, and raising interest in thinking deeply about the ideas it expresses.

Following the same stream of thought, Guilherme, Glaser and Garcia (2009 p.2000) claimed that experiential learning stressed the needs of learners; they are required to build new experiences on their own previous ones. As a result, the learners feel personally involved in the learning process; they have to make responsible contributions, as they develop the ability to evaluate their own learning.

The concept of experiential learning, introduced by Rogers (1969-1983), was reconsidered and developed by Kolb (1984). The latter explained that the learning process as a cycle with four stages : concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. This cycle can start at any stage and can also be repeated as much as learners need. Thus, experience alone is not sufficient; learners need also reflection, conceptualization, and action (Guilherme, Glaser and Garcia, 2009). In this sense, Byram (2009) explained that being intercultural starts by having an 'intercultural experience' when meeting people from different cultures. However, this experience is not enough it should be submitted for reflection and analysis that lead to action i.e. the ability of making judgments on the basis of explicit values, and hence, developing the sense of 'criticality'. These claims can be applied through the use of this telecollaborative project; learners have the opportunity to interact with other speakers of English, discuss different topics then reflect on this experience in class.

Most of the early telecollaborative projects tended to engage learners in the process of learning the languages of each other in interactions (eg. E-Tandem); or to make FL learners interact with the native speakers of a particular language. However, recent

approaches of telecollaboration shifted to link classes of EFL learners from different countries, not only with native speakers. There are two main reasons behind this shift; the first lies in the difficulty to find classes of native speakers to share this experience, despite the establishment of some web sites that aim at facilitating such interactions. The second is the recent status that the English language has gained as the world most used lingua franca. On this basis, participants in this project would use English as a lingua franca because the aim of the project is to develop learners ICC and not a native like proficiency (cf. O'Dowd,2016 b).

3.2.3. Finding the Partner

To find a telecollaborative partner/ class, the researcher posted an announcement that describes the project; the tool, the learners and the aim in the following three main electronic platforms: Google (+), www.uni-collaboration.eu and IATEFL group, as shown by the following screenshots



Figure 5 . Announcements of the telecollaborative project on Google (+) and IATEFL.

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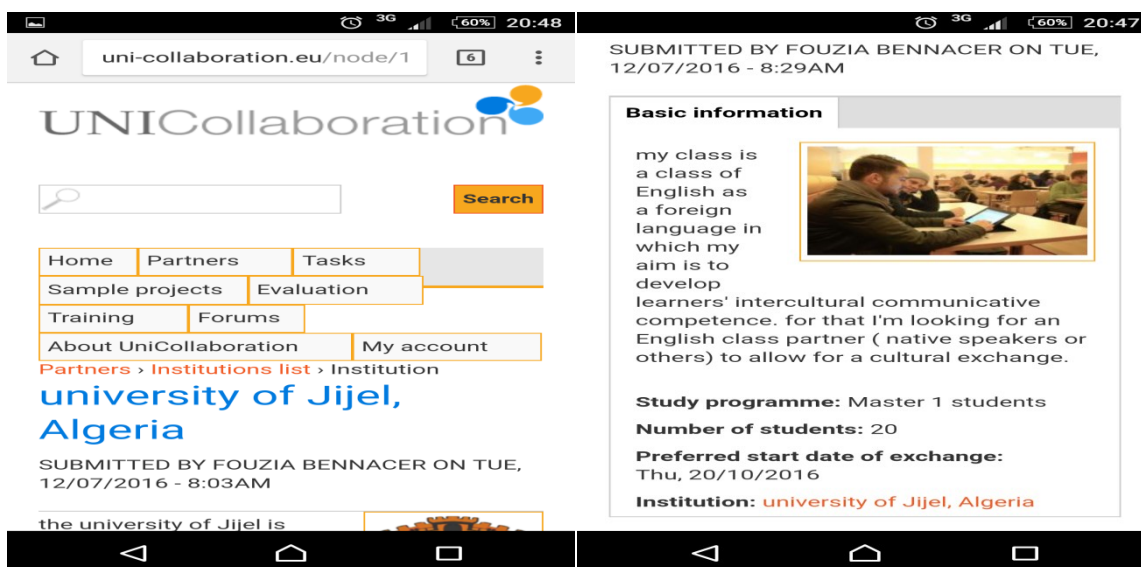


Figure 6 . Announcements of the telecollaborative project on www.uni-collaboration.eu

IATEFL group which is a Facebook group, it contains more than 14693 members (statistics of January 2017) who are EFL/ ESL teachers. It was the platform through which the teachers got in touch with each other for the planning and the realization of the present project. The telecollaborative partner was ‘Stephan Hughes’; an academic supervisor teaching a specialization program in English language teaching course. He participated in the project with a total of 32 students who are pre-service teachers, and whose ages ranged from 20 to 50 years old.



Figure 7 . Screenshot of the first contact with the telecollaborative partner.

To diversify the cultural knowledge and experience, the researcher used personal contact with previous learners to convince them to participate and share their experience in England with learners at home. The number of these learners is limited (12), but what matters is to enrich or feed the discussions with different experiences and viewpoints to take place within discussions. Furthermore, cultural tasks that include cultural knowledge were used as brainstorming that precedes discussions.

3.2.4. Selection of the Communication Tool

In this project, the tool that learners used in order to interact with other partners is 'Facebook'. It was selected on the following basis:

- A class discussion through which learners together with the researcher/teacher evaluated learners' use of technology, the net and different interaction tools such as emails, videoconferencing, and Skype. The majority of 'Master One' learners agreed that the most suitable tool and which they prefer is Facebook because they are familiar with it, and they can use it easily since it is a part of their everyday life. O'Dowd (2007) argued that for an online language learning process to be successful, learners should perceive the activities / tasks together with the communication tool as relevant to their learning practices in class and habitual practices in society respectively.
- The shift in modern pedagogy to consider the social experience of learners as a way to raise their motivation and to relate what is done in class to real life tasks. In this vein, Candlin and Mercers (2001) explained that:

no language teaching and learning takes place[...] in a classroom which is isolated from the world of experiences and personal engagements and investments of learners outside the classroom itself". Accordingly, the use of Facebook in the

context of the Algerian young learners is an attempt to consider the learners' social experience (cited in O'Dowd, 2005 p. 41).

- The different features that Facebook provides and which allow for various ways of interaction and communication including written and oral chat, synchronous and asynchronous communication.

Due to the fact that Facebook has many features (e.g. private messaging, posting on individual walls, sharing posts within news feed), it is necessary here to mention that the use of Facebook in this study is restricted to the use of the 'group' feature for privacy issues. In other words, joining the group does not mean that members share their personal profiles with others. Although they participate within the same group, they cannot get access to each other's profiles unless they send friendship requests and these requests are accepted.

The name of the group is '*Cross cultural critical thinkers*', it is a closed group, i.e. only participants of the project can join the group, and they are added by the two administrators/ teachers. The description of the group is decided to be as follows 'This group aims to promote an online cultural exchange between English learners from Algeria and Brazil. Members share views and comments on topics ranging from culture, to geography to national holidays and celebrations, and in the process hone their communicative competence and language skills. Members should act respectfully and avoid posting any improper or inappropriate content. Moderators hold the right to exclude members if they persist in this behavior after being warned three times. Interaction will take place around "weekly tasks" or assignments in which members are invited to post comments or upload photos on a given topic. A poll will be conducted every Friday to take suggestions for the topic of the following week.

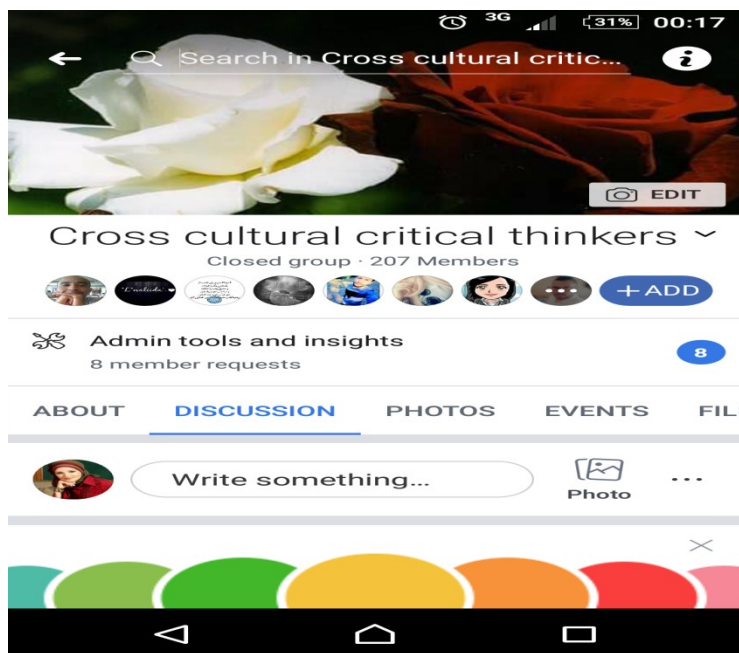


Figure 8. Screenshot for the ‘Cross cultural critical thinkers’ group.

Learners’ behaviour is further directed through establishing the group’s etiquette, the latter embeds do’s and don’ts that learners should respect while interacting with each other;

Do’S

- Treat group members respectfully,
- Be aware that what might be acceptable in one culture may not be in another,
- Respond to other members’ posts,
- Ask for more information before passing judgment about what other members might say e.g. “what do you mean when you said...”
- Avoid disrespectful or obscene language,
- Give examples or refer to sources to support your opinions,
- Show interest in what other members have to say and in their ideas,
- Be willing to negotiate and consider different points of view.

Don'ts

- Take comments personally,
- Use obscene or vulgar language,
- Make categorical assumptions or conclusions.

Learners in this project use the English language for their communication – be it oral or written-, both during online interaction or in class discussion and reflection. While writing, they are required to avoid the use of symbols and abbreviations because they may cause misunderstanding, since their use differs from one culture to another.

3.2.5. Participants

The participants of the present project are 'master one' EFL learners at the department of Letters and the English language at the university of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia/ Jijel. Their number is 126 learners, however, four learners did not participate in the Facebook group because they did not have an account. In class, they were divided into four groups. The class size is a reason behind taking all master learners in Jijel; the researcher wanted to find out the extent to which this method could be applicable with large classes. Besides, the researcher took into account the possibility of non-response; learners may not participate for various reasons and this would reduce the number of the sample population with its significance. These students interacted with Brazilian learners. The latter were EFL learners having a course in language studies, error correction, and using technology in the classroom as a teacher training course. Their age ranged from the early 20s to the 40s.

After evaluating the project, taking into consideration learners' ICC before and after the telecollaboration, a comparative study was conducted. The latter aims at

comparing the ICC level of EFL learners who participated in the project with that of learners who did not participate. The comparison group is taken from the university centre of Mila and within which 34 learners are involved. Their age ranged from 22 to 45 years old. They were not given the chance to interact with Brazilians as a class experience. This choice is adopted to avoid biasing results for the following main reasons:

- a) The same teacher is teaching all 'master one' groups in Jijel, therefore, if these learners were divided into two groups, the use of any treatment or teaching method that is different from one group to the other would raise learners' suspicion about the teachers' fairness, and would lead to demotivate learners because they would believe that the teacher favours some students over others.
- b) The frequent contact between these learners in both groups; they were friends; they met and discussed the tasks they did and what they had learned.
- c) 'Master one' learners at the university centre of Mila have the same age and the same modules/courses (*canvas*) as those of Jijel.

The aim behind the present research and the comparative study is not to prove that new technologies can replace humans, rather, the aim is to try to control extraneous variable as much as possible since learners have a module labelled 'language and culture' and that could possibly be the reason behind learners' ICC development. Therefore, comparing 'Master One' learners in Jijel and Mila (they have the same modules including *Language and Culture*) would help in deciding whether the ICC development, if any, is due to the instruction provided by the project, or that provided in other modules which address culture.

'Master one' learners are selected to be the population of this research for some particular reasons. First, they are supposed to have relatively developed good spoken and

written English which helps them communicate with foreign partners. Second, they are supposed to be cognitively mature which allow for the discussion, analysis, evaluation and reflection on deep topics. The latter are necessary skills for the development of ICC. Last, they have a module within their curriculum labeled '*Pratiques communicationnels*' which aims at developing the oral and written proficiency in real communication contexts.

In action research or in qualitative research in general, generalization is not aimed at; hence, small groups are the appropriate sample size. Therefore, in this project the groups are not numerous and the method is applied only in one university (Jijel).

3.2.6. Procedure

The first step in conducting the project was to introduce the course to the learners; its aim, tasks and their roles. In addition to the presentation of the tool to be used (Facebook), describing its features, usage, and the group they should join either using their actual account or through creating new ones. They were asked to send requests to join the group with a message that clarifies their real identity in case they use pseudonyms.

The second step in the project was interaction. The latter took place through phases. In the first phase, learners introduced themselves in order to be familiar with the other partners in the group and with the use of Facebook. In the second phase, learners discussed different cultural topics; they compared, reflected and negotiated different perceptions. Critical telecollaboration required learners from different countries to engage in discussions of sociopolitical issues characterized by conflicts and injustices, and deeply rooted stereotypes instead of superficial comparative themes that could doubtly lead to critical reflection. Henceforth, examples of the topics included holidays and celebrations, marriage, parenting at the beginning; then, more complicated topics like religion, wars in the world, refugees, media spoiling minds, world climate, political systems, economic

systems were discussed. Their online discussion of these topics was twined with a classroom discussion in which learners reflected on their own experience, and shared it with others. In the third phase, learners were engaged in project work, they were asked to prepare a 'report' about the world view of a particular subject (learners have the freedom to select this subject).

The selection of tasks was based on the work of O'Dowd and Waire (2009, pp 175-178) who proposed 12 types of tasks that can be used in online telecollaboration (see 2.2.3.6). Each task was described, and its objective and the intended outcome were defined to direct the evaluation of learners' achievement. The tasks were organized weekly by the two teachers who worked to satisfy the needs of the distant learners, from one hand, and the objectives of the courses and the telecollaborative project, from the other. Teachers designed their own tasks but some of them were adapted from other resources; mainly those of Huber-Kriegler, Lázár & John Strange (2003), and Facciol and Kjartansson (2003) (see Appendix F).

Learners were informed that their participation in the online group was compulsory; it is a part of their educational course for which they would be evaluated. The evaluation issue is considered by both teachers (in Algeria and Brazil) to raise learners' interest and participation, this act was a reflection on the pilot study; there were limited Brazilian participations and reflections due to the fact that participation was voluntarily.

3.2.7. Significance of the Research

Guth et. al. (2012) reported that, in the European Union, at the primary and the secondary school levels, telecollaboration was supported by online platforms as 'e-pals' (www.epals.com) and e-twinning (www.etwinning.net), but these platforms are limited at the level of university. This is mainly due to "difficulty in finding partners, misalignment

of academic calendars, differing assessment procedures and divergent attitudes towards online technologies” (Guth et. al. 2012, p. 4). Although an online platform (www.unicollaboration.eu) is established for this purpose (O’Dowd, 2015), it is still difficult to find a partner. Moreover, Guth et. al. (2012) clarified that the most frequently used tools in the European Universities are emails (74%), online discussion forums (67%), video/audio conferencing (63%), while social networks have not yet become common.

Similarly, Le Baron-Earle (2013) provided an interesting overview of articles that deal with raising ICC awareness using CALL, and which were published in 16 journals/ books from the year 2000 to 2012 (c.f. Le Baron-Earle, 2013 pp. 118-128). The results revealed that there is only one study from Africa (Senegal), while all the others are from Europe, America, Asia, or Australia. Regarding the use of online tools in these studies, Le Baron-Earle (2013) reported that e-mail and discussion forums are the most examined tools, followed by chat rooms, videoconferencing, blogs, virtual learning environment, but Facebook was not mentioned.

In the Arab world, the Connect Program is a telecollaborative program that uses videoconferencing as a tool to connect small college groups in the United States with others in the Middle-East (Muslims). The material used for prompting discussions include “raw news and interview footage from AlJazeera, Reuters and the British Broadcasting Company, in addition to academic and policy documents and lectures from relevant experts” (Belz,2007 p.129).

In Algeria, the Algerian government has started adopting e-learning within its educational policy through equipping the educational institutions with computers, data shows, labs, and internet by 2002 as a part of the educational reform (Bensafa, 2014). The World Bank cooperated with the ministry of education to implement ICTs with an

allocation of three billion dinars (Hamdy, 2007). Furthermore, the government signed some agreements with international organizations such as the UNESCO and the EU to integrate ICT into the Algerian educational system (Bensafa, 2014).

Besides the projects of equipping the educational institutions, other projects of distance learning were established; mainly 'Djaweb', 'Tarbiatic' and 'AVUNET'. The web-site <http://elearn.djaweb.dz//> is available for subscribers who can benefit from online lectures about ICTs, and human resources and finances (Guemide & Benachaiba, 2012). The 'Tarbiatic' platform provides students with various multimedia courses in different levels (middle and secondary schools). It is a platform that gathers teachers, students, parents and the school administration (Zidat & Djoudi, 2006). The AVUNET (Algerian Virtual University) was established for post-graduate students in many Algerian universities; they have an access to different educational resources found on the web-site. Within this platform, two main portals are found: 'Elabweb' and AVUNET.info where teachers and learners can exchange pedagogical information (Djoudi, 2009).

However, the use of e-learning in the primary, middle and secondary schools is subject to the administration and the teachers' training (Bensafa, 2014; Guemide & Benachaiba, 2012). For university teachers, they use data shows, labs and computers to enhance the quality of learning in a wider scope (Bensafa, 2014).

Concerning the use of the internet, Boulmerka (2016) found that although the internet is available at the ENS Constantine, and teachers are familiar with its use and willing to integrate it in their classes, no one is in fact using it. The main concerns that 50 ENS teachers raised are:

- Students may use the internet irresponsibly; for fun.

- The lack of equipment maintenance; although computers and the internet are available, keeping them in good conditions made teachers skeptical.
- The lack of training in collaborative learning.
- The size of classes.

It is of paramount importance to mention here that the use of the internet, in Boulmerka's study(2016), refers more to the ability to access authentic materials and to contact experts for enhancing teaching and learning skills.

Using the internet for a different purpose, Bensafa (2014) reported the results of a case study research that was carried out at the department of English/ university of Tlemcen. In his study, he used video-conferencing, as an alternative to face-to-face teaching, with ESP post-graduate students. Despite the recognition of the potential of the method, he concluded that it is at a very early stage in Algeria, mainly because of poor infrastructure and connectivity issues, and the lack of learning materials such as the audiovisual material and computers. Besides, not all learners have computers at home, high flow internet connection, and are electronically literate. In this sense, the different factors that affect the adoption of ICT and e-learning in Algeria are summarized in the following table.

Table 08.

Factors influencing ICT adoption.

Factors	Enabling Features	Constraining Features
Policy framework	A national ICT policy for educational development was set forth in 2002. The	The policy for ICT exists, but to be successfully implemented it needs

	government has adopted strong infrastructure and ICT in all domains, resources. particularly the education sector, as an integral part of the development process.	Vast areas of Algeria are still lagging behind in basic needs
Infrastructure and access		Algeria faces problems of poor infrastructure and connectivity issues.
Availability of appropriate learning materials	The development and provision of tools and learning material are at the heart of the policy of ICT for educational development.	There are not enough appropriate learning materials.
Rural/urban divisions	A major concern of the national ICT policy is provision of access and connectivity to all areas of the country.	Few schools and even fewer universities and higher institutions are available in rural communities.
Gender equity	A number of development projects, especially non-formal education programmes, are directed towards females being part of the underserved	In general, the level of illiteracy is higher among females and this is reflected in their access to ICT as well as training and skills.

population.	
Human resource development	<p>The multilingual base in Algeria poses a major hurdle to unifying or implementing programmes at a large scale. Professional development programmes and teacher training is still limited to basic ICT training with no connection or relevance to integration into the educational process. Professional development and ICT programmes lack connection with content and curriculum development in a manner that allows for proper implementation of reform.</p> <p>The disconnection among the different development programmes impedes proper impact and progress.</p>

Sustainability	<p>The political arena has stabilised somewhat in Algeria, thus setting the grounds for proper implementation of the development programmes and allowing for a more sustained effort. The political stability leading into economic reform allows for attracting investment and support locally and internationally.</p>
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Source. Hamdy, 2007 pp 07-08.

In a nutshell, the use of ICT and e-learning in the Algerian context is restricted to launching lectures and courses in different electronic platforms and web-sites as a kind of distance learning. This practice is noticed, not only with the government efforts, but also some teachers share their lectures with students using emails, and SNS like Facebook. Henceforth, the present study is different in design and goals; it illustrates the use of a blended learning approach within which the selected tool 'Facebook' is not used to launch the lectures that have been already covered in class; instead as a platform where the educational tasks are performed and accomplished. It provides authentic situations to practice language with distant EFL learners and to acquire knowledge. The aforementioned problems of the lack strong connectivity, materials, class size and the irresponsible use by students could be avoided since Facebook use does not require high flow connection like

other tools (e.g. video-conferencing), it provides both synchronous and asynchronous ways of communication, and it is used outside class – only feedback and reflection on the tasks is discussed in class.

3.3. Data Collection

Data in this study was collected through the use of a triangulation of tools, the latter aims at collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. The tools used include the questionnaire, the participant observation, and the focus groups; they represent both direct and indirect ones.

3.3.1. The Questionnaire

The questionnaire replaces the interview because of time constraints and the big number of students (160 students; 126 students in Jijel, and 34 in Mila). The questionnaire was used as a pretest to measure learners' ICC before the interaction. It is administered at the beginning of the project with the groups in Jijel and Mila. The same questionnaire/survey was administered at the end of the project to allow for a comparison of the learners' ICC level before and after the project.

Developing a test to assess learners' ICC is not an easy and simple task because of issues of reliability and validity i.e. The ICC test should be examined to ensure its validity and reliability. Therefore, this study adapted Fantini and Tirmizi (2006) survey '*Assessment of Intercultural Competence (AIC)*'; its components correspond with the operational definition selected for the present research (that of Byram, 1997), from one hand, and the validity and reliability of which is tested and approved, from the other. Furthermore, it is related to non-linear ICC development i.e. "ICC development may occur

occasionally with periods of regression or stagnation” (Czerwionka, Artamonova & Barbosa, 2014 p. 54), and it is a freely available survey instrument.

The survey ‘Assessment of Intercultural Competence (AIC)’ was developed with the aim of analyzing ICC during a wide range of international experiences; it is composed of 47 Likert-scaled questions that address students’ intercultural knowledge (11 Q.), attitude (13 Q.), skills (11Q.) and awareness (12 Q.), and relies on learners’ responses by ticking the appropriate choice from (0 : not at all, to 5: extremely well) (see Appendix ‘C’ for the original survey). However, the survey was modified to suit the situation and the participants of the present study (see Appendix ‘D’).

3.3.2. Participant Observation

Participant observation can be conceived as both a method and a methodology that researchers use in order to gain a deep understanding of the events or the context of the phenomenon under investigation (Darlington & Scott, 2002; Dawson, 2002). Using this method requires the researcher to be involved in the lives of the participants in an attempt to understand their behaviours and build trust relationships with them. Consequently, there are two types of participant observation; overt and covert observation. In the former, the participants are informed that the researcher is conducting a research, while in the latter the real identity of the researcher is hidden. The participant observation followed in the current study is an overt observation since the participants knew that their teacher is a researcher who tried to test the effectiveness of such method in the Algerian context. However, this method is applied only with ‘Master One’ learners at the university of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia / Jijel.

The observation of participants’ interaction on Facebook was done through the use of screen capture together with note taking where a grid was used to evaluate the

frequency, the significance of their participation, and the appropriateness of language use (see Appendix 'E'). The frequency refers to the extent to which learners are online active participants in the FB group, because it may not be appropriate to assume that this method is beneficial for those who do not participate. The significance refers to the quality of learners' participation i.e. whether they participate responding to others' views or they just answer the question of the teacher giving one's point of view and ignoring other different views. Besides, learners may google the information, copy it and post it which means that they do not spend much efforts and the language used does not reflect their own competence. The appropriateness of language use was evaluated in terms of grammar, vocabulary, and structure, from one side, and whether it was disrespectful or obscene, from the other.

While observing the participants in class, the researcher used note taking for oral discussions, and the analysis of learners' written productions in which they reflected on a particular task. Both online and in class participation, together with learners' test results throughout the whole project form participants' *portfolios*. The portfolios are a tool to assess learners' progress formatively.

3.3.3. The Focus Groups

This method requires asking a group of people to come together to discuss a certain issue. For that, focus groups are called also 'Discussion Groups' or 'Group Interviews' (Dawson, 2002 p. 29). Focus groups vary from being highly structured to being relatively unstructured by a moderator / facilitator who introduces the topic, asks questions, and ensures the participation of all the members. The discussion can be recorded, and the obtained data can be analyzed quantitatively or qualitatively (Dawson, 2002; Darlington & Scott, 2002). Focus groups are more useful when triangulated with other traditional

methods like questionnaires and observation (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2005). The use of this method should be guided by some issues;

- How many focus groups to be used? There should be more than one group.
- What is the size of these focus groups? They should not be too small or too large (between four and twelve members).
- Participants should have knowledge or experience in the required area.
- Participants should feel comfortable to talk i.e. the facilitator should make the participants trust him/her through ensuring that they will be heard and valued, and that they will experience no kind of pressure either from the side of the facilitator (to oblige them to talk) or from the side of the group members (Cohen et.al., 2005; Darling & Scott, 2002).

As any other research method, the focus group has pros and cons. The main advantages can be related to the impact of interaction on the participants. In other words, they help each other overcome inhibitions, feel comfortable to share their experiences, and remember issues that they might have forgotten especially if they are friends. Besides, they might ask each other questions which allow for the emergence of ideas and a wide range of responses in one meeting and in a short time compared to one-to-one interview, and which decreases the interference and the impact of researcher bias. Furthermore, focus groups help in gathering feedback from previous studies (Cohen et.al., 2005; Darling & Scott, 2002; Dawson, 2002).

However, the shortcoming of this method can be linked to either the participants or the researchers. On the one hand, the participants may feel shy, uncomfortable or nervous to talk in front of others; other participants may not contribute or just agree with the dominant ideas, while others may contaminate individual's views. On the other hand, the researcher may find it difficult to manage or moderate the group, may face obstacles due to

the lack of equipment, or may find difficulty in extracting individual views (Cohen et.al., 2005; Darling & Scott, 2002; Dawson, 2002).

In the present study, the focus group method was used only with Master one learners at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia/ Jijel, because they represent the participants with experience in the area of research, which is the use of Facebook as an educational tool to develop learners' ICC. It was carried out in May 2017, after the end of the telecollaborative project, throughout two whole days; the 24th and the 25th. Time allocated for each focus group discussion is one hour, and discussions were relatively structured and recorded using a Smartphone. The place where these discussions took place is the classes at the university of Mohammed Seddik ben Yahia/ Jijel (the Pole of Tassoust).

To decide about the rationale upon which learners should be divided into different focus groups, and the number of learners within each group, the method was first piloted. Consequently, learners were organized in twelve (12) different groups of eight to ten (8-10) members based on the frequency of their participation online. In other words, learners who frequently participated are grouped together, while those who participated less and those who rarely participated were put together. However, two last groups were a mixture of learners with different rates of participation, in an attempt to get more information. This decision was taken when the researcher had realized that no new ideas are emerging after listening to ten focus groups. Furthermore, members who did not take part in the online project (because they do not have FB accounts) did not participate in the focus groups.

This rationale was adopted for the division of learners and the formulation of the focus groups allowed for the occurrence of information including both advantages and disadvantages of the method i.e. those who rarely participated may feel shy and worthless

in the presence of those who frequently participated talking eagerly about their experience and what they have learned. To ensure making learners comfortable, the teacher/researcher worked to strengthen her relationship with the learners from the beginning of the year, both in the classroom and through FB friendships establishment.

Be it relatively structured/unstructured, the use of the focus group here required a group of questions to guide the discussions and to help the researcher manage and moderate the groups. The main questions asked are:

- 1- How do you evaluate your online participation in terms of frequency and regularity?

And why ?

This question aims at finding the reasons that pushed learners to participate frequently, less frequently or rarely. i.e. if it is really interesting or they just participate to get marks.

- 2- What have you thought about using Facebook for educational purposes?

This question seeks to find out whether learners had such kind of experience before, and their attitudes towards the use of FB in education before experiencing it.

- 3- Do you find the use of FB with class sessions an innovative motivating method?

This question dives to find out whether the method was motivating.

- 4- To what extent have you benefited from the experience in terms of:

a/ cultural knowledge,

b/ attitudes,

c/ skills of interpreting and relating,

d/ skills of discovery and interaction,

e/ promoting self confidence

- 5- To what extent have you benefited from the experience in terms of:

- a/ writing,
- b/ reading,
- c/ speaking,
- d/ listening.

Questions three and four aim at finding out how learners evaluate their ICC level and the linguistic level respectively.

6- What are the shortcomings that you have noticed?

Asking learners about the shortcoming of the telecollaborative project would help in stating the difficulties that may face the integration of such method in the Algerian context.

Dividing 122 students (04 students did not participate) into small focus groups of eight to ten learners resulted in about 15 focus groups which entails more than 15 hours of discussions and recording. The fulfilment of such task was difficult because of time constraints – the end of the semester and the examination period. Therefore, the researcher opted for sampling, more particularly ‘purposive sampling’ (cf. Dawson, 2002). In other words, when the ‘saturation point’ is felt to be reached and no new information is occurring, the researcher decides to stop listening to other focus groups. In this study, the ‘saturation point’ was reached with the tenth focus group, but the researcher added two further focus groups that constituted of learners with different participation rates to seek additional ideas, but unfortunately the same ideas were repeated.

The design of the current project was guided by the results of a piloting study that took place during the first semester of the academic year 2016/2017 with the same

participants. The following section is devoted to the description of the pilot study, its results, its implications, and its impact on the project.

3.4. Pilot Study

The pilot study was conducted throughout two months with the same design described previously for the telecollaborative project, however, some modification were made. This section is devoted to the description of the pilot study, its aim, the tasks used, and the results.

3.4.1. Description of the Study

The pilot study of the project was designed to provide 'master one' students at the university of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia/ Jijel with the opportunity to telecollaborate with other EFL learners and users of English from another culture (the Brazilian culture).

The telecollaborative partner is a Brazilian class of EFL learners who are teachers having a training course in using technology with professor Stephan Hughes. The researcher imbedded the use of such telecollaboration with the course '*pratiques communicationnels*' i.e. learners' participation on the Facebook group outside the class is a part of their course and the way they deal with online tasks will be taken into consideration as a part of their continuous evaluation/ formative assessment. From the other hand, the Brazilian teacher implemented the use of Facebook as an additional activity that learners may join to be a part of an experience where modern technology/ social media are used for educational purposes.

The Facebook group was first created on October, 25th 2017 with the name of 'The Algerian Brazilian connections'. Both Algerian and Brazilian learners were asked to send invitation requests to be added to the group by their teachers/'The Admins', with private

messages that clarify their real names if they adopt pseudonyms. This process took about a week, after which tasks started to be launched in the group. During the first two weeks of November, learners were given the chance to present and talk about themselves to be familiar with each other. It is worth mentioning that Brazilians used their real names on Facebook, but most Algerian learners used pseudonyms but while interacting they gave their names. Starting from mid-November, teachers co-posted the tasks that learners were supposed to deal with using appropriate and academic English.

3.4.2. The Aim of the Pilot Study

The pilot study aimed at checking the organization of the group and its suitability for educational tasks. It did not aim at testing the learners' linguistic or ICC skills but rather at finding out the extent to which the project provided an appropriate atmosphere for telecollaborative work. Henceforth, the results reported were linked to the design of the project itself and the type of tasks provided together with learners' responses and complain not the ICC or linguistic competence development.

3.4.3. Time and Duration

The study was piloted in the first semester of the Academic year 2016/1017. It started at the end of October and was enrolled till the end of December. In other words, it was carried out for about two months, during which one week was devoted for adding members to the group, two weeks for learners to present themselves and seven weeks for interaction responding to different tasks posted by the teachers. It is worth mentioning that the Facebook group provided a platform that allowed discussions in the Winter holidays.

3.4.4. Tasks

The tasks were distributed throughout seven weeks. The following is a description of the tasks used both online, and in the classroom, and their objectives.

Week 1: 14th – 21st November, 2016

The online task: .What kind(s) of intolerance are most prevalent in your country and how do you deal with the problem?

The objective: To raise learners' familiarity with each other (as members of the same group), and to make them familiar with the project.

In class task: Write about the types of intolerance that exist in your country, and others that exist in other countries that you know.

Objectives

- To make learners realize that the online tasks are not isolated from those in class.
- To develop/ assess their writing ability be it a subsequent of the linguistic competence.
- To raise learners' motivation to participate online and to read what others are writing.

Week 2: 21st -28th November, 2016.

The learners were given the chance of selecting the topic they would like to discuss this week. They selected from a list of alternatives:

- a- Corruption
- b- How your country treats tourists
- c- Political systems
- d- Other topics of your choice.

Based on the votes on the poll, the topic of the week was Corruption.

The online task: Learners discuss the topic guided by these questions:

- Does corruption exist in your country?
- When/where does it start?
- How do people in your country see corruption?

The objective: To raise learners' awareness about their own culture, and their knowledge about others' culture.

In class tas:. Learners express orally their ideas related to the topic 'corruption'.

The objective: To develop learners' fluency, and communication abilities (exchanging ideas, arguments, turn-taking...).

Week 3: 28th November- 05th December, 2016.

Before the selection of the topic for the week discussion, a poll was established and learners voted for 'the kidnapping of children', and 'educational systems'. Therefore, by popular demand, the topic of the week was 'child kidnapping'.

The online task: Take a look at this video. It was shot in the United States, but it might help us reflect on what happens in our countries.

Has social media made child kidnapping an epidemic?

The objective: learners exchange knowledge about child kidnapping in the two countries.

In class task: look at the comments posted in the page of the group. Read them carefully, try to find out the errors made, and correct them.

Objectives

- learners reflect on their own writing to raise their awareness.
- They notice and correct the common errors they do.
- To improve their writing skill.
- To encourage peer assessment and reflection.

Week 4: 05th Dec- 12th Dec, 2016.

Topic: Educational systems (Huber-Kriegler, Lázár & John Strange, 2003)

The online task1: Here is a scheme which might help you to think about educational differences, and to define more clearly the assumptions and underlying principles of your culture. In each case there is a continuum.

Q1/ How far to the left or right the culture you live in is placed.

Q2/ Which approach to education do you think is more advantageous to the student, and why?

The scheme

1. subject centred

learner centred

Some systems concern themselves entirely with the subject, and the material to be taught. They do not take the learners' starting-points, needs, and personalities into account. Lectures tend to fall into this category. Others, as in many primary schools, focus on the needs of individual learners or groups of learners, and encourage them to learn.

2. norm is best

norm is average

The “norm is best” approach puts achievement at the centre. Learners with the highest marks are singled out for praise and reward, and all are expected to aim at this level, even though it is clear that most will not achieve it. The “norm is average” approach tends to focus on the majority of learners, and if reasonable progress is made, most are happy.

3. learning for its own sake learning for personal development

Many see education as a process of assimilating and reproducing facts. But it can also be seen as only a part of the development of an individual's character and ability to evaluate and deal with the world and to find one's part in it.

4. learning for content knowledge learning to learn

Learning the dates of battles or how to solve equations as opposed to learning study skills (namely, how to skim and scan a text, how to take notes, where to look things up, etc.).

5. rote learning critical thinking

Memorising testable facts as opposed to emphasising the importance of learning how to think, question, doubt and discover.

6. teacher as controller teacher as facilitator

Teachers can take up different roles along the continuum from controlling everything that goes on in the classroom to just facilitating the process of learning.

7. graded proficiency tests progress reports

Testable facts can easily be converted into marks or rank orders of learners, as required by many systems. It is also possible to regard effort and progress as assessment criteria.

8. categorisation of subjectsintegration of subjects

Traditionally, in most systems there are “subjects”, like Maths and Geography. New trends promote integrating subjects and encourage a holistic approach.

The online task2

The left side of the previous scheme is probably prevalent in most educational systems. In the Netherlands, attempts have been made over the last fifteen years to introduce principles based on the right side, but these have failed, largely because of resistance by classroom teachers. In Britain, the National Curriculum has clearly moved things to the left, but factors from the right still play an important role. In Austria, primary education has largely moved to the right side of the continuum above. However, secondary and tertiary schools remained rather traditional.

Hungarian school teachers have not been well paid at all. Teachers in the lower grades of primary schools earn less than secretaries, semi-skilled workers or taxi drivers. On the other hand, they are usually in charge of about thirty children's educational and personal development for several years. These teachers teach about twenty-two lessons a week, substitute for other teachers quite frequently, are on corridor duty from 6 a.m. to 8 a.m. at least once a week, do a lot of administrative tasks and take their classes to educational places like the zoo, a museum, or a theatre performance in their free time. You really have to love children and be devoted to your profession to be a teacher in primary school. Or you have to be rich, and then you can afford this expensive hobby. In Hungary, there is a mixture of educational philosophies in most schools and probably in most teachers. The traditional teacher-centred, discipline and grade oriented classroom is probably still more frequent than the opposite. Although there are a lot of new “alternative” schools these days where teachers believe that learning to learn in a friendly

atmosphere is more beneficial for children and for the learning process, you can still find teachers who make learning seem like torture by criticising the students and their performance all the time, by giving them bad grades despite the students' efforts, by using old-fashioned and senseless punishments, and in general by acting as dictators and abusing their power.

The educational system of the United States is much more decentralised than that of any other country. Although certain federal regulations apply, the curriculum and funding are largely determined at the state level. Funding is partly local (the local school district, which is usually a town or city) and partly state (for example, California, New Jersey) with only a small percentage of funds coming from the federal government. Approximately 70% of American teachers are female. Teachers' conditions and salaries vary widely, and are also locally determined. Many teachers are unionised, although a few of the southern states do not have teachers' unions. In New Jersey, for example, all the teachers belong to a union, and their contracts are arrived at through collective bargaining. American schools are free and compulsory, and 90% of American children attend public (that is, state) schools. The remaining 10% attend religious private schools. Most American students do not wear a school uniform, nor do they pay for their own textbooks. (That cost is borne by the school district.) In several states, such as California, Texas and New York, a large number of students are not native speakers of English. In that case, the school districts are required by law to provide either bilingual education or ESL courses.

- What is it like to be a teacher in your culture?
- What tasks does a teacher in primary or secondary school have to fulfill?
- Are teachers appreciated financially and otherwise?
- Do students and/or parents complain if they do not agree with the teaching methods?

FACEBOOK AND EFL LEARNERS' INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

- Where does funding come from in the educational systems of the countries you know?
- Are the majority of teachers female?
- Do children wear a uniform?

The objective.

- To reflect on the learners' own values, behaviors and ways of thinking.
- To raise awareness of intercultural differences in values, behaviors and ways of thinking.

In class tasks learners are asked to write about educational systems guided by some instructions and questions.

- 1- What is like to be a teacher in your country? (behavior, social situation, relationship with learners)
- 2- Write a leaflet giving advice to someone from another culture who is coming to study at your university.

Here are some areas which you might like to think about:

- Beginning and end of the school year
- Subjects and what they cover, and why they are part of the syllabus
- Daily routine
- Relations with teachers
- Deadlines and punctuality
- Attendance requirements
- Study skills and approach: help and advice
- Student advisors
- Facilities.

3- Write about some educational systems that you know and compare them to your country's educational system.

4-What are the qualities and characteristics of teachers in your country? (social/ financial status, relationship with students...

5-How 'cheating in exams' is conceived in your country?

Week 5: 12th-19th December, 2016

Topic: Educational systems II

The online task: this week we will keep discussing the same topic education, but from different angles. Read the following information then reflect on your own culture guided by the coming questions;

According to American teachers working in Budapest, the majority of Hungarian students cheat like rug-dealers every time they take a test. The same American teachers claim that this is because Hungarian teachers do not impose sanctions on students when they are caught. On the contrary, Hungarian teachers often seem not to notice this dishonest behaviour on purpose. And if students get away with cheating, they will continue to use the easier way of taking tests.

- What is the attitude to cheating in school in your culture?
- What would you do if you saw a fellow student cheat?
- Do rug-dealers cheat? Or is this another negative stereotype?

Objectives

- To reflect on the learners' own values, behaviors and ways of thinking
- To raise awareness of intercultural differences in values, behaviors and ways of thinking.

In class task: Critical incidents that have relation to education.

- 1- Addressing the teacher .
- 2- Eating in class.
- 3- Cheating during a quiz.
- 4- Accepting a complement (Tomalin & Stempleski, 1993).

Objectives

- To increase cultural awareness and sensitivity to cultural differences
- To stimulate discussion and provide opportunities for students to express their news.

In class task.: learners are asked beforehand to look for and prepare different critical incidents to discuss them in class.

Objectives

- Practice reading/ listening skills
- Encourage pair/ group work which would result in peer-scaffolding, feedback and assessment
- To stimulate more discussion
- Provide opportunities to further increase cultural awareness and sensitivity to cultural differences.

Week 6 and 7: (19- 26 Dec, 2016) and (26 Dec- 02 Jan, 2017)

Week 6 (19-26 Dec, 2016) and week 7 (26 Dec- 02 Jan, 2017) are two weeks of winter holiday. Therefore, there were no class tasks; only online tasks are designed to keep contact with students.

Topic: Rock around the clock (Huber-Kriegler, Lázár & John Strange, 2003)

Task 1: In English, the words associated with time are very much the same as the words associated with money. That is, you can “spend”, “waste”, “invest”, “save”, etc. read the essay below, then answer the questions.

In most English-speaking cultures, the idea of wasting time is seen as very regrettable. It is not that there is any harm in simply doing nothing, but it is, for example, regarded as unacceptable to make others waste time by being late. This applies to public transport timetables, and all appointments in business, health care, education and so on. Here, you are expected to keep appointments “to the minute”. However, there are cultures where it is acceptable to keep appointments to the nearest hour or even day. There is no shame involved in being a couple of hours late. Time and delay are clearly used in many cultures to demonstrate power and authority. If you keep people waiting, you demonstrate that you have power over them. It becomes almost obligatory and expected. On the other hand, in much of Europe, it is considered bad manners.

English-language invitations to social events are sometimes formulated as “7.30 for 8p.m.”, for example for a formal dinner party. This means you are expected to arrive between 7.30 and 8 p.m., when the party or dinner will start. Arriving outside these times would be impolite. However, In Austrian university course booklets beginning times of courses used to be marked “s.t.” (sine tempore) or “c.t.” (cum tempore), meaning that a lecture given at 10 c.t. would start at 10.15 a.m. (“academic quarter”), s.t. or no marking meaning it would start at the exact given time (provided the lecturer him/herself was that punctual). More recently, however, it seems that most courses now start at exact given times, but the “academic quarter” is still referred to as an excuse when someone is late. Note, however, that this is a purely academic convention and, in general, does not apply to any other settings.

Q. At what time would your culture find it acceptable to arrive at a dinner party where the starting time was given as 8 p.m.? At a business appointment arranged for 10 a.m.? At a private language lesson arranged for 3 p.m.?

Task 2: Read the situation below and answer the questions:

Martha, an American teacher in the US, had just started teaching English to a group of Japanese students. She wanted to get to know her students more informally, so she invited them to her house for a party. The students all arrived at exactly 8:00 p.m. they seemed to enjoy the party: they danced, and ate most of the food. At about 10:00 one of the students said to the teacher: "I think it's time for me to leave. Thank you very much for the party." Then all the other students got up to go, and all left at the same time. Martha decided she would never invite them again!

Q. Why did all the students leave together?

Q. Why did Martha decide never to invite these students to her house again?

The tasks are distributed throughout the whole holiday to give learners time to reflect, without giving them much duties and tasks to do (since they are supposed to be in holidays).

Objectives

- To keep interaction between learners during the holidays, so that they keep using English.
- To raise learners' awareness of cultural differences.
- To reflect on their own culture and compare it to others.
- To raise learners knowledge of other cultures.

Homework

Task1

- How precisely do public transport follow the timetables in your culture?
- What is the attitude of passengers if trains and buses are late?
- Compare the situation in your culture to others you know.

Task2

Look at the list of words and select three which you personally associate with time.

Explain your choice in a short paragraph with a concrete example.

organisation – relaxation – stress – money – holidays – family – cigarette –
 work – future – motivation – competition – food – calendar – watch –
 movement – past – obligation

Task 3

The fable of the tortoise and the hare is quite well known in Europe, and is reflected in a number of sayings

“ Haste makes waste”

“ More haste, less speed”

Are those in ‘highly conscious’ cultures missing out on important things?

Does the tortoise know something we do not?

The objective

- Develop the learners’ critical thinking and awareness
- Develop the writing skill and the oral skill.

After this period of time learners were given one week to evaluate the project and their participation online. Their online interaction was directed by the following instruction:

Before starting the second semester, let's discuss the efficiency of using this Facebook group within the educational process.

- 3- Did you find it useful and helpful? How?
- 4- What are the advantages and disadvantages of using this method?
- 5- What are the things that you want to change or add in the second semester?

During these two months, the researcher used an evaluation grid to assess the online interaction, note-taking in class, and learners' written productions to evaluate their participation. However, learners' evaluation of the project is of paramount importance. Henceforth, this post had the aim of helping the teachers to evaluate the project, and to provide further remedies, if possible, in case any shortcoming would be noticed. On the light of what teachers had noticed throughout the whole period of interaction and what learners explained and shared, some insights were generated and addressed while organizing the project.

3.4.5. Results

The evaluation of the pilot study revealed both advantages and shortcomings. Responding to the post that recommend the evaluation of the Facebook group, learners expressed their satisfaction with the organization since not all members of the group have the right to post –only the teachers/ admins do-, they have only the right to comment on the posts of teachers. The advantages that students described are mainly linked to the things

they benefited from during the period of interaction. These could be summarized in the following points:

- 1- The method was helpful to develop the writing skill because it helped them learn from their mistakes, and learn from each other.
- 2- The learners have acquired new cultural knowledge each week.
- 3- The method enriched learners' vocabulary.
- 4- Reading others' comments helped in improving oneself.
- 5- The method helped in developing the critical thinking skills.
- 6- The method helped the learners to express their opinions and feelings freely due to the absence of pressure, especially for shy and introvert students who are reticent to talk in class.
- 7- The method helped the participants to provide feedback for each other.
- 8- The method allowed interacting and exchanging points of view.
- 9- It was a new enjoyable method that learners have never used, and which raised their motivation.
- 10- The method helped to develop learners' ability to disagree in a respectful way.
- 11- The method gave learners enough time to reflect on their mistakes and correct them (grammar, punctuation, structure, spelling...).
- 12- The method improved the oral skills.
- 13- The method changed Facebook from just a tool to waste time to an educational one.

However, the shortcomings appeared to be linked to the learners' behavior –be they Algerians or Brazilians-, and the bad net connection. In other words, Algerian learners were numerous compared to the Brazilian ones. Because their Facebook participation was additional and they were not evaluated for it, Brazilian learners rarely participated.

Consequently, Algerian learners found themselves discussing tasks with each other which resulted in sharing similar points of view and similar culture. The latter was a major obstacle that prevented cultural exchange and as a result would prevent the development of ICC which is the aim of the project.

Besides, the Algerian learners felt obliged to participate because their evaluation would have been affected. This fact pushed some of them to google information, copy it, and then paste it to get a good mark. This kind of behaviour resulted in a lack of interaction and exchange of ideas, and consequently hindered developing the ICC skills and abilities. Furthermore, some learners wanted to have direct live oral chat to develop the speaking skill because the focus was more on the writing skill, however, the majority reacted against the idea because they could not join anytime i.e. it was impossible to have all students online at the same time, and it would be useless because of being numerous.

To solve the problem of having a big number of students, some learners suggested posting more than one task per week; learners were divided into groups, and they were assigned different tasks to avoid the repetition of the ideas, and to enrich the process of learning. i.e. learners in each group discussed something different, and learned at the same time from what others discuss. Concerning the type of tasks, learners asked for more tasks that require the discussion of debatable issues, and that aim at developing critical thinking.

As a response to the results gained from piloting the study, the teachers decided to follow some modifications to satisfy learners' needs and preferences, and to improve the study in order to achieve its objective which is the development of ICC. To overcome the first shortcoming pointed and which was the rare participation of Brazilian partners, the Brazilian teacher decided to include the Facebook interaction to be a part of the course, and to include the evaluation factor, i.e., Brazilian learners will be obliged to participate

because they will be evaluated for the online tasks. This decision guaranteed a regular participation of Brazilians in the online interaction during the study.

Moreover, the Algerian teacher/ researcher kept the online participation as part of the whole course (blended approach) that will be evaluated. However, she informed her learners that participation contents that are copied from different websites are not considered/ counted; instead they are regarded as instances of plagiarism. They were recommended to paraphrase/ summarize information, to write it in their own style, and to use the quotation marks and the source in the case of quoting.

As it was planned on the onset of the project, the type of tasks differs from one phase of interaction to the other. This decision is further confirmed by learners who asked for more discussions of debatable issues. Henceforth, learners were divided, from time to time, to subgroups and different tasks were assigned to avoid the repetition of the same ideas, and to provide them with an opportunity to benefit from what others discuss. After bringing these modifications, the study started after the end of the first term examinations to spread over 12 weeks.

Conclusion

The present chapter aimed at a detailed description of the research telecollaborative project carried out in the present study. It has presented the design of the project and how it was modified after being piloted for two months. In addition, the tools used for data collection were clarified paving the way for the presentation, the analysis and the discussion of the results for which the next chapters are devoted.

Chapter Four: Participant Observation Analysis

Introduction

This chapter aims at presenting and analysing the results gained from observing the 'Master One' EFL learners at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia/ Jijel. First, it attempts to clarify the procedure through which the observation took place, and how learners' portfolios were formulated. Second, a description of each learner's profile is provided but in a concise and precise manner depicting points related to the aim of the study. Finally, these detailed results are summarized to help in generating and forming a global idea of the results, and relate them to other results gained from the other research tools.

4.1. Procedure

The participants' observation took place throughout the whole project using various methods, and considering both the online discussions and in class ones. To achieve a satisfactory observation, an observation scheme (Appendix E) was used to help the researcher evaluate the participation and behaviour of learners within the Facebook group. The scheme considered the learners' real names, Facebook names, the frequency of their participation, the frequency of their interaction and communication with other members in the group, the accuracy and appropriateness of the language used, and a column was left for further observations and comments that the researcher would realize while evaluating their participation. Each online task is evaluated using a similar but a new scheme to allow following learners' participation and development throughout the whole project.

Class discussions were related to online discussions in an attempt to make learners reflect on what they had learnt, either in terms of knowledge or behaviour, and to share

what they had learnt with others in class. These class discussions aimed to help learners develop their speaking since the Facebook group focused more on writing. Class discussions were observed through the use of note-taking. In other words, the researcher participated in class discussions and took notes at the same time. However, to avoid forgetting what these notes mean, and possible confusion if the notes were just collected and kept for future amelioration. The researcher developed the notes and organized them as soon as the class discussions had finished. Moreover, the module within which this project was embedded is labelled '*Pratiques Communicationnels*', i.e., not only oral communication should be aimed at, but also written communication. To fulfil the objectives of the module, participants from time to time, were required to respond to the task instruction in a written form. Henceforth, participants' observation in class took into consideration oral discussions through note taking, in addition to the written ones through correcting and analysing learners' pieces of writing. While analysing the latter, both language forms and content were considered and evaluated.

Learners' contributions in the online Facebook group together with their participation in class were described weekly, and learners' portfolios were created to help the researcher follow their development. These portfolios included also their exam results. This observation did not take into consideration those learners who quieted or dropped out their studies at the beginning or the middle of the project and whose number was 09, although these learners kept participating in the Facebook group and had answered the questionnaire (pre-test).

4.2. Portfolio Description

Presenting and analysing the results of participants' observation will be done through the description of learners' portfolios, instead of presenting online and in class

results separately since both online and in class behaviours are part of the overall addressed behaviour of learners. Henceforth, each learner's behaviour, throughout the whole project/study, will be described and analysed individually to pave the way for a summary, although some learners showed similar characteristics which would result in some redundancy while describing them individually. Learners' behaviour is described and analysed in relation to the frequency and type of their participation in the online task and in class, and the skills required to develop ICC including linguistic competence. Thus, the following depiction of results imbeds the findings yielded from the learners' portfolios and the teacher's observation. This is done as concisely and precisely as possible.

Learner1: She was participating online frequently; she posted comments and interacted with other mates throughout all the topics. In class, she was at the beginning a very shy girl, but with time her participation increased. In her interaction and communication, she showed enhancement in the different abilities that constitute ICC with the four components. Moreover, she tended to act as a mediator in case of misunderstandings that occurred sometimes. In terms of writing and speaking, she improved the way she presented and organised her ideas, the use of punctuation, spelling together with pronunciation and fluency. Her comments became free of mistakes because she used to edit them after revision.

Learner 2: She was a frequent and regular participant in the online group, as she never absented in class. Her online participation included both posting and replying to others. She was shy at the beginning but she could get over her shyness later on, and became an active participant in class. However, she stopped participating during the last month of the project. She expressed herself in a good language, both spoken and written. Moreover, she manifested abilities of tolerance, awareness of one's own and others' cultural affiliations

which helped her interpret behaviours and avoid judgements, respect, value and be open towards differences. Besides, she shared with some of her class mates the characteristic of questioning what is taken for granted, and searching for different answers in different places.

Learner 3: She participated online frequently, she developed her abilities of respect and empathy with time together with other ICC abilities. The latter were eminent/ prevalent in class when discussions took place. Spending years away of classes made her feel shy and less confident during the early sessions, but the last months witnessed her active contribution, interaction and participation in class. This behaviour reflected an improvement in vocabulary, grammar and language structures, in general. The latters were used to write organised sentences and to express ideas orally. Although she had a problem with the net connection, she insisted on the participation.

Learner 4: She was an active student in class; she used a good language to communicate in both forms, oral and written. However, she rarely participated online. Regarding her ICC skills, she showed tolerance, respect, awareness and she often avoided judgements. She lacked curiosity to know about others, and could not develop her ability to decentre from one's own cultural affiliations although she showed awareness of how these cultural affiliations would shape one's behaviour, and an ability to evaluate critically what is taken for granted.

Learner 5: She was a medium participant in the online group, but she both posted and interacted with other members. In class, she was silent and shy at the beginning, but eventually, she participated more. Linguistically speaking, she became better in terms of grammar and vocabulary, punctuation and structure (in writing), but she needed to work more on fluency. Regarding ICC abilities, she manifested various abilities linked to

respect, awareness and tolerance. But those abilities related to the decentring from one's own affiliations and questioning what is taken for granted were not developed.

Learner 6: She participated frequently and regularly. Her posts were a mixture of sharing ideas, and responding to others. In her online interaction, she improved the language used with time, with a tendency of self-correction. In class, she was an extrovert who participated always, but she developed with time the ability to think critically, to question what is taken for granted together with other ICC abilities. She showed a noticeable development in the different abilities of ICC but little in linguistic competence, especially in speaking.

Learner 7: In the online group she both posted and interacted with other members but not frequently. In class, she was silent and shy at the beginning, but eventually, she participated more. Linguistically speaking, she became a bit better in terms of grammar and vocabulary, punctuation and structure (in writing), but she needed to work more on fluency. Regarding ICC abilities, she manifested various abilities linked to respect, awareness and tolerance. But, little enhancement was achieved in relation to the ability of decentring from one's own affiliations and questioning what is taken for granted.

Learner 8: In class, she was an extrovert who could gradually express herself in a good way; she could get over her shyness and became active in class discussions. In the online group, her participation was medium but it involved both posting and interacting with others. Linguistically, she became better especially in using punctuation, grammar and vocabulary in term of writing. Furthermore, she developed the different abilities required for developing ICC including showing respect, awareness, tolerance and decentring from one's own cultural affiliations, and questioning what is taken for granted.

Learner 9: She was a medium participant in the online group; from time to time, she either posted or interacted with other members. In class, she was silent and shy at the beginning, but eventually, she participated more. Linguistically speaking, she became better in terms of grammar and vocabulary, punctuation and structure (in writing), but she had to work more to develop fluency. For the ICC abilities, she manifested various abilities linked to respect, awareness, tolerance and questioning what is taken for granted, but not decentring from one's own affiliations.

Learner 10: An extrovert learner that expresses herself well orally, but when writing, she used informal structures, abbreviations, symbols..., these characteristics of the online chat were also used in her class written assignments. She frequently and regularly participated in the online interactions, and in class discussions. Gradually, she avoided the use of informal/ non academic writing and replaced it with full words, sentences and structures. She, furthermore, developed her respect towards others' opinions, developed a sense of openness, curiosity, tolerance and awareness of both one's culture and others. In spite of the fact that she was at the beginning judgemental, she became aware of the danger of judgements and prejudices, and warned others against them.

Learner 11: She was a medium participant in the online group; she was a housewife with multiple responsibilities and lost her Facebook account many times. When participating, she only posted her point of view regarding the topic of discussion. In class, she expressed herself using a good but not fluent language. Besides, she manifested feelings of tolerance, awareness, respect, and openness towards different points of view and cultures.

Learner 12: A girl who tended to stay alone and avoid interaction with her classmates because of losing her closest friend, from one side, and having the migraine illness, from the other side. After chatting with the teacher in her private box on Facebook, asking for

some advice, she started participating in the Facebook group frequently and regularly, and interacting with other mates. Her participation in class gradually became better in terms of fluency, interaction with others and the language used. Moreover, her writing at the beginning was bad, but with time she succeeded to work on it; she improved her spelling and grammar, and enriched her vocabulary and structures. Beside linguistic and interaction skills, she was able to enhance those of openness, respect, curiosity and awareness of one's own and others together with critical thinking.

Learner 13: She participated online frequently, although she appeared at the beginning to be ethnocentric, she developed her abilities of respect and empathy with time together with other ICC abilities. The latter were prevalent in class when discussions took place. Spending years away of classes made her feel shy and less confident during the early sessions, but later she was characterised by an active contribution, interaction and participation in class. This behaviour resulted in improvements in vocabulary, grammar and language structures, in general.

Learner 14: She was a medium participant in the online group; she posted her comments but rarely interacted with other members. In class, she was silent and shy at the beginning, but eventually, she participated more. Linguistically speaking, she became better in terms of grammar and vocabulary, punctuation and structure (in writing). Regarding ICC abilities, she manifested various abilities linked to respect, and awareness. But she needs to work more on abilities related to the decentring from one's own affiliations and questioning what is taken for granted and tolerance.

Learner 15: He was good in both speaking and writing. He interacted frequently with his mates both online and in class, sharing his ideas and new vocabulary. Travelling a lot

helped him to develop a sense of openness, empathy, acceptance and respect for others. Henceforth, he tended to act as mediator in case of misunderstandings, or disputes.

Learner 16: She did not participate frequently and regularly in the online group because she was working in a translation office. When participating, she only posted her point of view regarding the topic of discussion. In class, she expressed herself using a good language, both in speaking and writing. Furthermore, she manifested feelings of tolerance, awareness, respect, and openness towards different points of view and cultures.

Learner 17: She was good in expressing herself through writing, but her shyness prevented her from expressing herself orally. She participated online frequently sharing her ideas in relation to different topics, and responding to others' comments. With time, she managed to overcome her shyness, and became fluent participant in class. Both online and in class discussions revealed her abilities to decentre from her own culture, and to develop feelings of respect towards the different others, openness, curiosity and awareness that helped her to think critically and avoid judgements.

Learner 18: Because of dropping out classes and of using English for three years, she was very shy and lacked self-confidence together with the language proficiency necessary for communication. While speaking, she used body language to compensate the lack of vocabulary, but in writing, she could not convey her ideas appropriately. She frequently participated in the online group, despite the net connection problems she faced in the campus. She became aware of her weaknesses and searched for solutions to overcome them. During the last month, she became better; she gained more self-confidence, she participated more in class with a better language, and her written products became better as well as her comments which she tended to edit to correct herself. Her feelings of openness, respect, empathy and curiosity were shown towards her own culture and towards

other cultures. At the end of the year, she thanked the teacher for the online group because it helped her to overcome her difficulties providing a floor for language practice, to get familiar with class mates, and to compare oneself with others to notice weaknesses.

Learner 19: At the beginning of the project she regularly and frequently participated in the online group but she stopped posting during the last month. Her participation included both expressing her ideas and replying to mates' questions and posts. In class, she was a shy girl who waited for others to give her the floor to talk. Linguistically speaking, she was able express herself appropriately but with a shortage in vocabulary that she compensated using body language or seeking friends' help. But communicatively speaking, she interacted in a respectful manner and succeeded to avoid judgements. Nevertheless, abilities to decentre from one's own cultural affiliations, and to recognise their influence together with questioning what is taken for granted were not developed, and this was noticed in her body language reaction when classmates questioned surrounding beliefs.

Learner 20: He participated frequently and regularly. His posts were a mixture of sharing ideas, and responding to others. In his online interaction, he improved the language used with time, with a tendency of self-correction. In class, he was an extrovert who participated always. He developed with time the ability to think critically and to question what is taken for granted together with other ICC abilities. He showed a noticeable development in the different abilities of ICC but little in linguistic competence especially in speaking.

Learner 21: She was participating online frequently; she posted comments and interacted with other mates throughout all the topics. In class, she was at the beginning a very shy girl, but with time her participation increased. In her interaction and communication, she showed enhancement in the different abilities that constitute ICC with the four components. Moreover, she tended to act as a mediator in case of misunderstandings that

occurred sometimes. In terms of writing and speaking, she improved the way she presented and organised her ideas, the use of punctuation, spelling together with pronunciation and fluency. Her comments became free of mistakes because she used to edit them after revision.

Learner 22: She participated frequently and regularly. Her posts were a mixture of sharing ideas, and responding to others. In her online interaction, she improved the language used with time, with a tendency towards self-correction. In class, she was an extrovert who participated always, and she developed gradually the ability to think critically and to question what is taken for granted together with other ICC abilities.

Learner 23: She had not a Facebook account because her family was against the use of Social Media. She was most of the time silent in class, and refused to talk when the teacher asked her to do. Her level was stable throughout the whole year.

Learner 24: A learner with a large experience in life(45 years old). He had the ability to express himself both orally and in a written form. He participated frequently, but his participation was restricted to posting/ sharing his points of view, and he rarely responded to others' comments because he did not have time due to his work. He showed abilities related to ICC at an early stage with a modest personality that accepted his mates' views.

Learner 25: She was a frequent participant in the online group, and never absented in class. Her online participation included both posting and replying to others' comments. However, she stopped participating during the last month of the project. In class, she was an introvert; she expressed herself in a good manner. Moreover, she manifested abilities of tolerance, awareness of one's and others' cultural affiliations which helped her to avoid judgements, and respect, value and be open towards differences. Besides, she agreed with

her classmates in questioning what is taken for granted and searching for different answers in different places.

Learner 26: She was good in expressing herself through writing, but her shyness prevented her from expressing herself orally. She participated online frequently sharing her ideas in relation to different topics, and responding to others' comments. With time, she could overcome her shyness, and became fluent participant in class. Both online and in class discussions revealed her abilities to decentre from her own culture, and to develop feelings of respect towards the different others, openness, curiosity and awareness that helped her to think critically and avoid judgements.

Learner 27: She was a frequent and regular participant. Her posts were a mixture of sharing ideas, and replying to others' ones. In her online interaction, she improved the language used with time because she tended to correct and edit her comments. In class, she was an extrovert who participated always, and developed gradually the ability to think critically and to question what is taken for granted together with other ICC abilities.

Learner 28: She was participating online frequently; she posted comments and interacted with other mates throughout all the topics. In class, she was at the beginning a very shy girl, but eventually an increase in her participation was noticed. In her interaction and communication, she showed enhancement in the different abilities that constitute ICC. Besides, she tended to act as a mediator in case of misunderstandings. In terms of writing and speaking, she improved the way she presented and organised her ideas, the use of punctuation, spelling together with pronunciation and fluency. Her comments became free of mistakes because she used to edit them after revision.

Learner 29: She was a frequent and regular participant in the online group, as she never absented in class. Her online participation included both posting and replying to others.

However, she stopped participating during the last month of the project. In class she was an introvert; she expressed herself in a good language, both spoken and written. Moreover, she developed abilities of tolerance, awareness of one's own and others' cultural affiliations which helped her interpret behaviours and avoid judgements, respect, value and be open towards differences. Besides, questioning what is taken for granted and searching for different answers in different places was evident in her contributions.

Learner 30: At the beginning of the project she regularly and frequently participated in the online group but she stopped posting during the last month. Her participation included both expressing her ideas and replying to mates' questions and posts. In class, she was a shy girl who waited for others to give her the floor to talk. Linguistically speaking, she could express herself appropriately but with a poor vocabulary that she compensated using body language. But communicatively speaking, she interacted in a respectful manner and succeeded to avoid judgements. Nevertheless, abilities to decentre from one's own cultural affiliations, and to recognise their influence together with questioning what is taken for granted were not developed.

Learner 31: She was a frequent participant; she posted comments and interacted with other mates throughout all the topics. In class, she was at the beginning a very shy girl, but with time she overcame her shyness, and her participation increased. In her interaction and communication, she showed enhancement in the different abilities that constitute ICC with the four components. In terms of writing and speaking, she improved the way she presented and organised her ideas, the use of punctuation, spelling together with pronunciation and fluency. Her comments became free of mistakes because she used to edit them after revision.

Learner 32: He participated frequently online including both posting comments and replying to other mates. At the beginning, he showed strong ethnocentrism and judgements towards other different opinions, especially if religion is mentioned. However, with time he expressed more comprehension, understanding and openness. The latter were associated with other abilities of respect, curiosity and awareness linked to cultural diversity, i.e. he noticeably changed the way he argued and addressed others, and the language he selected to disagree. In terms of speaking and writing, he became better in expressing himself using more vocabulary than gestures and body language, and more organised paragraphs with less grammatical and syntactical mistakes.

Learner 33: A very anxious girl who started shaking when talking in front of public/others. This character affected her participation both in class and in the online group. Although it was predicted that shy students would like to express themselves in the group because they used fake names, her high level of anxiety debilitated her from participating. In class, she hardly spoke, and in the online group she posted replies where she agreed with what others said. Henceforth, although she often agreed that people should tolerate each other, and not run for judgements, it cannot be said that she developed the abilities related to ICC since it was difficult to assess them due to her lack of contribution be it online or in class. In her writing, grammar and vocabulary constraints can be easily noticed together with structure and organization.

Learner 34: A shy girl whose voice was always absent during the first weeks. She changed her behaviour to participate in class oral discussions later on. She participated frequently online. Despite the fact that she lost her Facebook account many times, she insisted on creating new accounts and sending requests to be part of the discussions. She improved her cultural knowledge, attitudes and cultural awareness, and became able to defend her ideas

with arguments that showed her respect to the others, openness and tolerance. Her correctness in writing online was characterized by self-correction, and was reflected in her writings in class; i.e. she improved her vocabulary, grammar and structures both in writing and speaking.

Learner 35: Her participation in the online group was medium unlike in class whereby she never absented. Despite the fact that she didn't post in the group regularly, she used to read her mates' comments and to refer back to their ideas in class. Eventually, she expressed feelings of tolerance towards differences and ambiguity, and warned against prejudgements and prejudices reasoning that respect should govern relationships. However, the ability to decentre from one's own cultural affiliation and to question what is taken for granted are abilities that emerged in some situations but faded in others. In terms of grammar and vocabulary, little enhancement was signalled compared with her level at the beginning of the course.

Learner 36: She was a very shy student, she rarely said a word in class and she rarely participated online also. She showed a weak level linguistically, both in speaking and writing, with little improvement if any. Regarding the ICC abilities, her lack of interaction prevented the occurrence of any except for some cases of agreement with what her class mates said about tolerance and prejudgements.

Learner 37: She participated frequently and regularly. Her posts were a mixture of sharing ideas, and responding to others. In her online interaction, she improved the language she used gradually, with a tendency of self-correction. In class, she was an extrovert who always participated. With time, she developed the ability to think critically and to question what is taken for granted together with other ICC abilities.

Learner 38: She was a very shy student; she rarely said a word in class. She did not have a Facebook account at the beginning, but later on she succeeded to convince her father that she will use it only for educational purposes. Joining the Facebook group a bit late she rarely participated online. She showed a weak level linguistically, both in speaking and writing, with little improvement if any. Regarding the ICC abilities, her lack of interaction prevented the occurrence of any except for some cases of agreement with what her class mates said about tolerance and prejudgements.

Learner 39: She was participating online frequently; she posted comments and interacted with other mates throughout all the topics. In class, she was at the beginning a very shy girl, but with time her participation increased. In her interaction and communication, she showed enhancement in the different abilities that constitute ICC with the four components. In terms of writing, she improved the way she organised her ideas, the use of punctuation and spelling. Her comments became free of mistakes because she used to edit them after revision, but in speaking she improved a little.

Learner 40: Although he did not participate frequently online, his posts were a mixture of separate posts and replies to friends. In the posts, he showed an increasing ability to tolerate ambiguity and to try to explain things from different perspectives that differ from his own standpoint, even when mates did not answer his questions; he always gave them justifications as the net problems. In class, he rarely absented, he tended to discuss topics with his friends using the same character noticed in the online discussions i.e. openness and curiosity, respect and evaluating one's own views and those of others critically. However, little improvement was noticed in his writing in terms of grammar, vocabulary and structure. In speaking, he became more fluent and willing to speak in class together with arguing in an acceptable and appropriate manner.

Learner 41: She was a very shy student, she rarely said a word in class and she rarely participated online also. She showed a weak level linguistically, both in speaking and writing, with little improvement if any. Regarding the ICC abilities, her lack of interaction prevented the occurrence of any except for some cases of nodding to show agreement with what her class mates said about tolerance and prejudgements.

Learner 42: She was participating online frequently; she posted comments and interacted with other mates throughout all the topics. In class, her participation increased with time. In her contributions, enhancement in the different abilities that constitute ICC was noticed with the four components. Moreover, she tended to act as a mediator in case of misunderstandings that occurred sometimes. In terms of writing, she improved the way she presented and organised her ideas, the use of punctuation, and spelling because she used to edit them after revision. In speaking, pronunciation and fluency were a little better.

Learner 43: A good speaker who is fond of topics that push learners think critically, his ideas in class stimulated his class mates' reactions giving arguments and counter arguments, they started questioning things taken for granted when reacting to his questions. Despite that, he suffered from organizing ideas and putting them in well structured sentences, he could not solve this problem throughout the whole year. At the early beginning of the project, he talked about his negative attitudes towards the use of Facebook in general, and its use in education in particular; he was completely against. This fact together with the bad net connection formed justifications for his rare participation in the Facebook group. Furthermore, he assumed that the cultural knowledge found in these discussions could be gained elsewhere. Despite the fact that he did not participate online frequently, he showed some interaction skills with the ability to tolerate ambiguity, he

showed interest in knowing about others' different affiliations or to cooperate with them. Besides, other ICC abilities could be remarked in class.

Learner 44: A good speaker and writer, linguistically speaking, who studied in different conditions and atmosphere (Licence classic). Henceforth, at the beginning she was against the use of Facebook because she found the idea new, different and challenging compared to what she had as responsibilities at home, but later on she was accustomed to it, but still, she did not participate frequently. In class, she was quiet listening to others' opinions which she found completely different from hers; she called her class mates 'the new generation', and tried to adapt herself to the new situation. Considering the abilities related to ICC, she showed some of them from the beginning, then, little improvement was noticed.

Learner 45: She participated online frequently, although she showed at the beginning to be ethnocentric, she developed her abilities of respect and empathy with time together with other ICC abilities. The latter were prevalent in class when discussions took place. Spending years away of classes made her feel shy and less confident during the early sessions, but the last weeks witnessed her active contribution, interaction and participation in class. This behaviour reflected an improvement in vocabulary, grammar and language structures, in general, used to write organised sentences and to express ideas orally.

Learner 46: A shy girl coming from another wilaya after three years of getting the Licence; she was far away from studies and using the English language. She was very shy and lacked self-confidence together with the language proficiency necessary for communication. While speaking, she used gestures and body language to compensate the lack of vocabulary, but in writing, she could not convey her ideas appropriately. She frequently participated in the online group, despite the net connection problems she faced

in the campus. She became aware of her weaknesses and searched for solutions to overcome them. By the last weeks, her mood became better; she gained more self-confidence. She participated more in class with a better language. Her written pieces became better as well as her comments which she tended to edit and correct herself. Her feelings of openness, respect, empathy and curiosity were shown towards her own subculture, the Jijlian subculture and towards other cultures. At the end of the year, she thanked the teacher for the online group because it helped her to overcome her difficulties providing an opportunity for language practice, to get familiar with class mates, and to compare oneself with others to notice weaknesses.

Learner 47: She participated online frequently, although she was at the beginning ethnocentric, she developed her abilities of respect and empathy with time together with other ICC abilities. The latter were prevalent in class when discussions took place. The last weeks witnessed her active contribution, interaction and participation in class. This behaviour reflected an improvement in vocabulary, grammar and language structures both in writing and speaking.

Learner 48: She participated online frequently, she developed her abilities of respect and empathy with time together with other ICC abilities. The latter were eminent/ prevalent in class when discussions took place. This behaviour reflected an improvement in vocabulary, grammar and language structures used to write organised sentences and to express ideas orally. She had a problem with net connection, but she insisted on the participation. She was an introvert i.e. she was silent but she listened carefully to others. When she participated in class or online, she used a good language.

Learner 49: Linguistically speaking, she expressed herself very well in both forms, oral and written. She gradually learned to follow more academic writing and to use it

elsewhere. She was at the beginning judgemental and ethnocentric, and very often contributed in class discussions that turned to be conflicts. But, with time, she became more open minded, respected others' opinions and standpoints and argued for the importance of raising one's awareness about one's own culture and others to avoid misunderstandings, conflicts, and judgements.

Learner 50: She participated online frequently and regularly. Her posts were a mixture of sharing ideas, and responding to others. In her online interaction, she improved the language used with time, with a tendency of self-correction. In class, she was an introvert who did not participate always, but she developed with time the ability to think critically and to question what is taken for granted together with other ICC abilities. She showed a noticeable development in the different abilities of ICC but little in linguistic competence especially in speaking.

Learner 51: She participated online frequently, although she showed at the beginning to be ethnocentric, she developed her abilities of respect and empathy with time together with other ICC abilities. In class, her mates recognised her active contribution, interaction and participation that increased gradually. Improvements in vocabulary, grammar and language structures were noticed in her written organised sentences, and in oral contributions.

Learner 52: She was good in expressing herself through writing, but her shyness prevented her from expressing herself orally. She participated online frequently sharing her ideas in relation to the different topics, and responding to others' comments. With time, she could overcome her shyness, and became fluent participant in class. Both online and in class discussions revealed her abilities to decentre from her own culture, and to develop feelings of respect towards the different others, openness, curiosity and awareness that helped her to think critically and avoid judgements.

Learner 53: she had not a Facebook account because she belongs to a very conservative family. She was a very shy girl who was hardly heard in class. There were no significant improvements in her language proficiency in general, and the ICC level in particular.

Learner 54: An extrovert learner that expressed herself well orally, but when writing, she used informal structures, abbreviations, symbols..., these characteristics of the online chat were also used in class written assignments. She frequently and regularly participated in the online interactions, and in class discussions. Gradually, she avoided the use of informal/ non academic writing and replaced it with full words, sentences and structures. She, furthermore, developed her respect towards others' opinions, developed a sense of openness, curiosity, tolerance and awareness of both one's culture and others. In spite of the fact that she was at the beginning judgemental, she became aware of the danger of judgements and prejudices, and warned others against it.

Learner 55: She was participating online frequently; she posted comments and interacted with other mates throughout all the topics. In class, she was at the beginning a shy girl, but with time her participation increased. In her interaction and communication, she showed enhancement in the different abilities that constitute ICC with its four components. In terms of writing, she improved the way she presented and organised her ideas, the use of punctuation, and spelling because she used to edit them after revision. In terms of speaking, she became better in pronunciation and fluency.

Learner 56: She participated frequently in the online group, and never absented in class. Her online participation included both posting and replying to others. She was a shy girl at the beginning but she could get over her shyness later on, and became an active participant in class. She expressed herself in a good language, both in speaking and writing. Moreover, she manifested abilities of tolerance, awareness of one's own and others' cultural

affiliations which helped her interpret behaviours and avoid judgements, respect, value and be open towards differences.

Learner 57: She was a frequent and regular participant in the online group. Her online participation included both posting and replying to others. However, she stopped participating during the last weeks of the project. In class she was an extrovert; she expressed herself in a good language, both spoken and written. Moreover, she manifested abilities of tolerance, awareness of one's own and others' cultural affiliations. These abilities helped her in interpreting behaviours and avoid judgements, and respect, value and be open towards differences. Besides, she agreed with her classmates in questioning what is taken for granted and searching for different answers in different places.

Learner 58: She was a medium participant in the online group, but she both posted and interacted with other members. In class, she was silent and shy at the beginning, but eventually, she participated more. Linguistically speaking, she became better in terms of grammar and vocabulary, punctuation and structure (in writing), but she needed to work more on the spoken form. Regarding ICC abilities, she showed various abilities linked to respect, awareness and tolerance. But those abilities related to the decentring from one's own affiliations and questioning what is taken for granted were not noticed.

Learner 59: She was a frequent and regular participant in the online group at the beginning of the project, but she stopped posting during the last month. Her participation was about expressing her ideas and replying to mates' questions and posts. In class, she was a shy girl who waited for others to give her the chance to express her ideas. Linguistically, she could express herself but with a lack in vocabulary that she compensated using body language or seeking friends' help. But communicatively, she interacted in a respectful manner and succeeded to avoid judgements. Nevertheless, abilities to decentre from one's own cultural

affiliations, and to recognise their influence together with questioning what is taken for granted were not developed, and this is noticed in her body language reaction when a friend questioned particular ideas in class.

Learner 60: She was a medium participant in the online discussions; her posts were either to agree or disagree with others without any significant language use. She had many responsibilities at home which prevented her from devoting more efforts to her studies. Her contribution was medium and the language she used reflected a weak level. Throughout the whole course, she showed no real improvement in her skills except for abilities of tolerance, awareness and avoiding judgements.

Learner 61: He was a medium participant in the online discussions; his posts were either to agree or disagree with others without any use of language or expressed ideas. In class, he lacked interest in learning and made many absences. When present, his contribution was medium and the language he used reflected a weak level. Throughout the whole course, no real improvement in his skills was noticed apart from abilities of tolerance, awareness and avoiding judgements.

Learner 62: She participated frequently and regularly. Her posts were a mixture of sharing ideas, and responding to others. In her online interaction, she improved the language used with time, with a tendency of self-correction. In class, she was an introvert who participated rarely, but she developed with time the ability to think critically and to question what is taken for granted together with other ICC abilities. She showed a noticeable development in the different abilities of ICC but little in linguistic competence especially in speaking.

Learner 63: Linguistically speaking, she expressed herself very well in both forms, oral and written. She learned to follow more academic writing, gradually, and to use it

elsewhere. She was at the beginning judgemental and ethnocentric, and very often she created conflicts in class. But, with time, she became more open minded, respected others' opinions and standpoints and argued for the importance of raising one's awareness about one's own culture and others to avoid misunderstandings, conflicts, and judgements.

Learner 64: She was good in expressing herself through writing, but her shyness prevented her from expressing herself orally. She participated online frequently sharing her ideas in relation to different topics, and responding to others' comments. Eventually, she could overcome her shyness, and became fluent participant in class. Both online and in class discussions revealed her abilities to decentre from her own culture, and to develop feelings of respect towards the different others, openness, curiosity and awareness that helped her to think critically and avoid judgements

Learner 65: She was a medium participant in the online discussions; her posts were either to agree or disagree with others without any significant language use. She had many responsibilities at home and at work which prevented her from devoting more efforts to her studies. Her contribution was medium and the language she used reflected a weak level. Throughout the whole course, she showed little improvements in her skills, and for the abilities of tolerance, awareness and avoiding judgements.

Learner 66: A shy girl whose voice was always absent during the first months. She changed her behaviour to participate in the classroom oral discussions later on. She participated frequently online. She improved her cultural knowledge, attitudes and cultural awareness, and became able to defend her ideas with arguments that showed her respect to the others, openness and tolerance. Her correctness in writing online was characterized by self-correction, and was reflected in her writings in class i.e. she improved her vocabulary, grammar and structures both in writing and speaking.

Learner 67: She was a medium participant in the online group, but she both posted and interacted with other members. In class, she was silent and shy at the beginning, but eventually, she participated more. Linguistically speaking, she became better in terms of grammar and vocabulary, punctuation and structure (in writing), but she needed to work more on fluency. Regarding ICC abilities, she manifested various abilities linked to respect, awareness and tolerance. But those abilities related to the decentring from one's own affiliations and questioning what is taken for granted were not developed.

Learner 68: She suffered from a bad net connection, she waited until going home to post. Consequently, she rarely interacted with others but her posts most of the time came at the end of the discussions to give a summary of her mates points of view, then giving her own standpoint. This fact showed the behaviour of a mediator who can understand different points of views expressed in different ways, respect and value them, then compare them to each other or one's own. In class, she was active, a good listener to others and expressed herself well. Her oral and written language developed especially in terms of fluency, grammar and structure.

Learner 69: She was a medium participant in the online group, but she both posted and interacted with other members. In class, she was silent and shy at the beginning, but eventually, she participated more. Linguistically speaking, she became better in terms of grammar and vocabulary, punctuation and structure. Regarding ICC abilities, she manifested various abilities linked to respect, awareness and tolerance, decentring from one's own affiliations and questioning what is taken for granted.

Learner 70: She was a frequent and regular participant in the online group, as she never absented in class. Her online participation included both posting and replying to others. She was shy at the beginning but she could get over her shyness later on, and became an

active participant in class. However, she stopped participating during the last weeks of the project. She expressed herself in a good language, both spoken and written. Moreover, she exhibited abilities of tolerance, awareness of one's own and others' cultural affiliations which helped her interpret behaviours and avoid judgements, and respect, value and be open towards differences. Besides, she took part in questioning what is taken for granted and searching for different answers in different places.

Learner 71: She was participating online frequently; she posted comments and interacted with other mates throughout all the discussions. In class, she participated also frequently. In her interaction and communication, she showed enhancement in the different abilities that constitute ICC with the four components. In terms of writing and speaking, she improved the way she presented and organised her ideas, the use of punctuation, spelling together with pronunciation and fluency. Her comments became free of mistakes because she used to edit them after revision.

Learner 72: A shy girl coming from another wilaya after two years of getting the Licence. She was very shy and lacked self-confidence together with the language proficiency necessary for communication. She frequently participated in the online group, despite the net connection problems she faced in the campus. She became aware of her weaknesses and searched for solutions to overcome them. Eventually, she gained more self-confidence, she participated more in class with a better language, and her written pieces became better as well as her comments which she tended to edit in order to correct her writings. Her feelings of openness, respect, empathy and curiosity were shown towards her own subculture, the Jijlian subculture and towards other cultures. At the end of the year, she thanked the teacher for the online group because it helped her to overcome her difficulties

providing a floor for language practice, to get familiar with class mates, and to compare oneself with others to notice weaknesses.

Learner 73: She was a medium participant in the online discussions; her posts were either to agree or disagree with others without any significant language use. She had many responsibilities at home which prevented her from devoting more efforts to her studies. Her contribution was medium and the language she used reflected a weak level. Throughout the whole course, she showed no real improvement in her skills except for abilities of tolerance, awareness and avoiding judgements.

Learner 74: She was a frequent and regular participant in the online group, as she never absented in class. Her online participation included both posting and replying to others. She was shy at the beginning but she could get over her shyness later on, and became an active participant in class. She expressed herself in a good language, both spoken and written. Moreover, she manifested abilities of tolerance, awareness of one's own and others' cultural affiliations which helped her interpret behaviours and avoid judgements, and respect, value and be open towards differences. Besides, she took a part in questioning what is taken for granted and searching for different answers in different places.

Learner 75: She was a medium participant in the online group, but she both posted and interacted with other members. In class, she was silent and shy at the beginning, but eventually, she participated more. Linguistically speaking, she became better in terms of grammar and vocabulary, punctuation, structure together with pronunciation and fluency. Regarding ICC abilities, she showed various abilities linked to respect, awareness and tolerance. But those abilities related to the decentring from one's own affiliations and questioning what is taken for granted were not noticed.

Learner 76: She participated online frequently, although she showed at the beginning to be ethnocentric, she developed her abilities of respect and empathy with time together with other ICC abilities. The last weeks witnessed her active contribution, interaction and participation in class. This behaviour revealed an improvement in vocabulary, grammar and language structures, in general, used to write organised sentences and to express ideas orally.

Learner 77: In class, she was an extrovert who could express herself in a good way increasingly; she could get over her shyness and became active in class discussions. In the online group, her participation was medium but it embedded both posting and interacting with others. Linguistically, she became better especially in using punctuation, grammar and vocabulary in term of writing. Furthermore, she developed the different abilities required for developing ICC including showing respect, awareness, tolerance and decentring from one's own cultural affiliations, and questioning what is taken for granted.

Learner 78: She was a medium participant in the online discussions; her posts were either to agree or disagree with others without any significant language use. She was pregnant and she had many responsibilities at home which prevented her from devoting more efforts to her studies. Her contribution was medium and the language she used witnessed little improvements. Throughout the whole course, she showed improvements in abilities related to tolerance, awareness and avoiding judgements.

Learner 79: She was participating online frequently; she posted comments and interacted with other mates throughout all the topics. In class, she was at the beginning a shy girl, but with time her participation increased. In her interaction and communication, she showed enhancement in the different abilities that constitute ICC with the four components. Moreover, she tended to act as a mediator in case of misunderstandings that occurred

sometimes. In terms of writing and speaking, she improved the way she presented and organised her ideas, the use of punctuation, spelling together with pronunciation and fluency. Her comments became free of mistakes because she used to edit them after revision.

Learner 80: She was a frequent and regular participant in the online group, as she never absented in class. Her online participation included both posting and replying to others. However, she stopped participating during the last month of the project for personal reasons. In class she was an introvert; she expressed herself in a good language, both spoken and written. Moreover, she manifested abilities of tolerance, awareness of one's own and others' cultural affiliations which helped her interpret behaviours and avoid judgements, and respect, value and be open towards differences. Besides, she shared her classmates' questioning of what is taken for granted.

Learner 81: She was a medium participant in the online discussions; her posts were either to agree or disagree with others without any significant language use. In class, she was absent most of the time. Her contribution was average and the language she used reflected a weak level. Throughout the whole course, she showed no real improvement in her skills.

Learner 82: An extrovert learner that expresses himself well orally, but when writing, he used informal structures, abbreviations, symbols..., these characteristics of the online chat were also used in his written assignments. He frequently and regularly participated in the online interactions, and in class discussions. Gradually, he avoided the use of informal/ non academic writing and replaced it with full words, sentences and structures. He, furthermore, developed his respect towards others' opinions, developed a sense of openness, curiosity, tolerance and awareness of both one's culture and others. In spite of the fact that he was at the beginning judgemental, he became aware of the danger of

judgements and prejudices, and warned others against it. Gradually, he improved his writing including spelling, grammar, structures and organization of ideas.

Learner 83: She participated online frequently, she developed her abilities of respect and empathy with time together with other ICC abilities. In class, she was shy at the beginning but later she became an active contributor. Improvements in vocabulary, grammar and language structures, in general, used to write organised sentences and to express ideas orally emerged gradually.

Learner 84: Linguistically speaking, she expressed herself very well in both forms, oral and written. She learned to follow more academic writing instead of symbols and abbreviations, gradually. She was at the beginning judgemental and ethnocentric, and very often she was part of in class discussions that turned to be conflicts. But, with time, she became more open minded, respectful towards others' opinions and standpoints and argued for the importance of raising one's awareness about one's own culture and others to avoid misunderstandings, conflicts, and judgements

Learner 85: She was a very shy student, she rarely said a word in class and she rarely participated online also. She showed a weak level linguistically, both in speaking and writing, with little improvement. Her lack of interaction prevented the occurrence of any ICC abilities except for some cases of agreement with what some classmates said about tolerance and prejudgements.

Learner 86: He lacked motivation throughout the whole course; he believed that he will do nothing with these studies; instead he has to work and get a job. Besides, he argued that English classes are useless since the diplomat given is not helpful in getting a job. This lack of motivation was reflected in his behaviour in class where he did not show interest or significant contribution, as he lacked engagement with others in doing tasks or sharing

ideas. Similarly, his participation in the online group was modest. The development of ICC abilities was almost absent except for some gained cultural knowledge.

Learner 87: She faced many difficulties including being away of study and using English for a long period, living in a new atmosphere (wilaya) far from home, and studying an option that is completely different from that of her licence. She could not get over these difficulties to focus on study and to improve herself. These conditions had a negative impact on her participation in class where she was most of the time absent minded or physically absent. In the online group, she rarely participated, and when she did, her participation was superficial.

Learner 88: She was a medium participant in the online group, but she both posted and replied to those of the other members. In class, she was silent and shy at the beginning, but eventually, she participated more. Linguistically speaking, she became better in terms of grammar and vocabulary, punctuation and structure, but she needed to work more to better fluency. Regarding ICC abilities, she manifested various abilities linked to respect, awareness and tolerance. But those abilities related to the decentring from one's own affiliations and questioning what is taken for granted were not developed.

Learner 89: She was a medium participant in the online group; she posted from time to time and rarely interacted with other members. In class, she was silent and shy at the beginning, but eventually, she participated more. Linguistically speaking, she became better in terms of grammar and vocabulary, punctuation and structure as she showed enhancement in fluency. Regarding ICC abilities, she manifested various abilities linked to respect, awareness and tolerance, decentring from one's own affiliations and questioning what is taken for granted.

Learner 90: She was a medium participant in the online group, but she both posted and interacted with other members. In class, she was an extrovert but she made a lot of language errors. Eventually, she became better in terms of grammar and vocabulary, punctuation and structure, but she needs to work more on fluency. Regarding ICC abilities, she manifested various abilities linked to respect, awareness and tolerance. But those abilities related to the decentring from one's own affiliations and questioning what is taken for granted were not developed.

Learner 91: She participated online frequently, and developed her abilities of respect and empathy with time together with other ICC abilities. During the last weeks, she succeeded to overcome her shyness and became active in terms of contribution, interaction and participation in class. These contributions revealed an improvement in vocabulary, grammar and language structures, in general, used to write organised sentences and to express ideas orally.

Learner 92: She was a medium participant in the online group, but she rarely posted and her main participation was related to comments through which she agreed or disagreed with other members. In class, she was silent and shy at the beginning, but eventually, she participated more. Linguistically speaking, she was good in terms of grammar and vocabulary, punctuation and structure (in writing), but she needed to work more on fluency. Regarding ICC abilities, she manifested various abilities linked to respect, awareness and tolerance. But those abilities related to the decentring from one's own affiliations and questioning what is taken for granted were not developed.

Learner 93: She was an average participant in the online group; she posted from time to time and interacted with other members. In class, she was silent and shy at the beginning, but eventually, she participated more. Linguistically, little achievement was noticed in

terms of grammar and vocabulary, punctuation and structure (in writing), as she needed to work more on vocabulary and fluency; she relied a lot on body language in conveying messages. Regarding ICC abilities, she manifested various abilities linked to respect, awareness and tolerance. But those abilities related to the decentring from one's own affiliations and questioning what is taken for granted were not developed.

Learner 94: She participated frequently and regularly. Her posts were a mixture of sharing ideas, and responding to others. In her online interaction, she improved the language used with time, with a tendency of self-correction. In class, she was an extrovert who participated always although little improvement was noticed in her oral performance. She developed, with time, the ability to think critically and to question what is taken for granted together with other ICC abilities. She showed a noticeable development in the different abilities of ICC but little in linguistic competence especially in speaking.

Learner 95: Linguistically speaking, he expressed himself very well in both forms, oral and written. He learned to follow more academic writing, gradually. He was at the beginning judgemental and ethnocentric, and very often got into in class discussions that turned to be conflicts. But, with time, he became more open minded, respected others' opinions and standpoints and argued for the importance of raising one's awareness about one's own culture and others to avoid misunderstandings, conflicts, and judgements.

Learner 96: She was a medium participant in the online group, because she lost her Facebook account many times; she posted and interacted with other members. In class, she was silent and shy at the beginning, but eventually, she participated more. Linguistically speaking, she became better in terms of grammar, punctuation and structure (in writing), but she needs to work more on vocabulary, pronunciation and fluency. Regarding ICC abilities, she manifested various abilities linked to respect, awareness and tolerance. But

those abilities related to the decentring from one's own affiliations and questioning what is taken for granted were not developed.

Learner 97: She participated frequently and regularly. Her posts were a mixture of sharing ideas, and responding to others. In her online interaction, she improved the language used with time, with a tendency of self-correction. In class, she was an introvert who participated from time to time, but she developed with time the ability to think critically and to question what is taken for granted together with other ICC abilities.

Learner 98: She was a medium participant in the online group; she posted her comments but rarely interacted with other members. In class, she was silent and shy at the beginning, but eventually, she participated more. Linguistically speaking, she became better in terms of grammar, punctuation and structure (in writing), but she needed to work more on vocabulary, pronunciation and fluency. Regarding ICC abilities, she manifested various abilities linked to respect, awareness and tolerance. But those abilities related to the decentring from one's own affiliations and questioning what is taken for granted were not developed.

Learner 99: She was a medium participant in the online group; she both posted comments and rarely interacted with other members. In class, she was silent and shy at the beginning, but eventually, she started talking. Linguistically speaking, she became better in terms of grammar and vocabulary, punctuation and structure. Regarding ICC abilities, she manifested various abilities linked to respect, awareness and tolerance, together with those abilities related to the decentring from one's own affiliations and questioning what is taken for granted.

Learner 100: A shy girl who is good in expressing herself through writing, but her shyness prevented her from expressing herself orally. She participated online frequently sharing her

ideas and responding to others' comments. With time, she could overcome her shyness, and became fluent participant in class. Both online and in class discussions revealed her abilities to decentre from her own culture, and to develop feelings of respect towards the different others, openness, curiosity and awareness that helped her to think critically and avoid judgements.

Learner 101: Her participation in the online group was medium unlike in class. Despite the fact that she did not post in the group regularly, she used to read her mates' comments and to refer back to their ideas in class. Eventually, she expressed feelings of tolerance towards differences and ambiguity, and warned against prejudgements and prejudices reasoning that respect should govern relationships. However, the ability to decentre from one's own cultural affiliation and to question what is taken for granted are abilities that emerged in some situations but faded in others. In terms of grammar and vocabulary, enhancement was signalled compared with her level at the beginning of the course.

Learner 102: An extrovert learner who expresses herself well orally, but when writing, she used informal structures, abbreviations, symbols...., these characteristics of the online chat were also found in her in class written assignments. She frequently and regularly participated in the online interactions, and in class discussions. Gradually, she avoided the use of informal/ non academic writing and replaced it with full words, sentences and structures. She, furthermore, developed her respect towards others' opinions, developed a sense of openness, curiosity, tolerance and awareness of both one's culture and others. In spite the fact that she was at the beginning judgemental, she became aware of the danger of judgements and prejudices, and warned others against it. Gradually, she improved her writing including spelling, grammar, structures and organization of ideas.

Learner 103: She was good in expressing herself through writing, but her shyness prevented her from expressing herself orally. She participated online frequently by posting her ideas in relation to different topics, and replying to others' comments. With time, she could overcome her shyness, and became fluent participant in class. Both online and in class discussions revealed her abilities to decentre from her own culture, and to develop feelings of respect towards the different others, openness, curiosity and awareness that helped her to think critically and avoid judgements.

Learner 104: Linguistically speaking, this girl expressed herself very well in both forms, oral and written. However, in writing she tended to use a lot informal language using symbols, abbreviations and icons. She learned to use more academic writing style, gradually, and to use it in other situations of online chat. She was at the beginning judgemental and ethnocentric, and very often she took part in class discussions that turned to be controversial. But, with time, she became more open minded, respected others' opinions and standpoints and argued for the importance of raising one's awareness about one's own culture and others to avoid misunderstandings, conflicts, and judgements.

Learner 105: An extrovert girl who devoted all her time for study; she never absented in class, and she participated regularly in the online interaction. At the beginning, she caused some problems with some mates because she used offensive language and was ethnocentric, but she apologized later on, and realized that she had to show respect, and to accept difference. She improved her behaviour related to interaction skills, openness, avoiding judgements and prejudices, curiosity and awareness through comparing oneself to others. Besides, her writing and speaking became better in terms of vocabulary, organization and structures.

Learner 106: She was a frequent participant who is good in expressing herself through writing, but her shyness prevented her from expressing herself orally. She participated online by sharing her ideas in relation to different topics, and responding to others' comments. With time, she could overcome her shyness, and became fluent participant in class. Both online and in class discussions revealed her abilities to decentre from her own culture, and to develop feelings of respect towards the different others, openness, curiosity and awareness that helped her to think critically and avoid judgements.

Learners 107: She was participating online frequently; she posted comments and interacted with other mates throughout all the topics. In class, she was at the beginning a shy girl, but with time her participation increased. In her interaction and communication, she showed enhancement in the different abilities that constitute ICC with the four components. In terms of writing and speaking, she improved the way she presented and organised her ideas, the use of punctuation, spelling together with pronunciation and fluency. Her comments became free of mistakes because she used to edit them after revision.

Learner 108: She was participating online frequently; she posted comments and interacted with other mates throughout all the topics. In class, she was an extrovert who expressed herself using a good language. In her interaction and communication, she showed enhancement in the different abilities that constitute ICC with the four components. Moreover, she tended to act as a mediator instances of misunderstanding occurred. In terms of writing and speaking, she improved the way she presented and organised her ideas, the use of punctuation, spelling together with pronunciation and fluency. Her comments became free of mistakes because she used to edit them after revision.

Learner 109: She was a frequent participant in the online group, as she never absented in class. Her online participation included both posting and replying to others. However, she stopped participating during the last month of the project because of illness. In class she was an introvert; she expressed herself in a good language. Moreover, she manifested abilities of tolerance, awareness of one's own and others' cultural affiliations which helped her interpret behaviours and avoid judgements, and respect, value and be open towards differences. Besides, she participated with her classmates in questioning what is taken for granted. Her writing developed significantly, especially in terms of grammar, punctuation and structure, and vocabulary.

Learner 110: She was a very shy student who just listened to what others say, she rarely said a word in class and she rarely participated online. She showed a weak level linguistically, both in speaking and writing, with little improvement if any. Regarding the ICC abilities, her lack of interaction prevented the occurrence of any except for some cases of agreement with what her class mates said about tolerance and prejudgements.

Learner 111: She was a very shy student, she rarely uttered a word in class and she rarely participated online also. She showed a weak level linguistically, both in speaking and writing, with little improvement if any. Regarding the ICC abilities, her lack of interaction prevented the occurrence of any except for some cases of agreement with what her class mates said about tolerance and prejudgements.

Learner 112: She rarely participated online because of her conditions; her posts were either to agree or disagree with others without any significant language use. She had many responsibilities at home which prevented her from devoting more efforts to her studies. Her contribution was medium and the language she used reflected a modest level. With time, she became more frequently present in class discussions, and her writing and speaking

became better together with some ICC abilities like tolerance, awareness and avoiding judgements.

Learner 113: She was a medium participant in both online and in class discussions. She tended to stop talking or interacting in case she disagreed with the ideas shared by her mates. She often used the expression: “this is my point of view, you cannot convince me”. In other words, she could not decentre from her own cultural affiliations, as she often tended to judge her mates unconsciously, although she explained many times that people should not judge each other. She believed that interaction with other different people is not necessary, and that one is not obliged to speak or interact with others or know about them; only close friends are needed. This perspective explained her online interaction that took place only with her real life friends but not other members in the group. Linguistically speaking, little enhancement was marked.

Learner 114: Her posts were a mixture of sharing ideas, and responding to others. She was a frequent and regular participant in both online and in class. In her online interaction, she improved the language used with time, with a tendency to self-correction. In class, she always was an extrovert who participated, and developed with time the ability to think critically and to question what is taken for granted together with other ICC abilities.

Learner 115: A very anxious girl who tended to start shaking when talking in front of public /others. This character affected her participation both in class and in the online group. Although it was predicted that shy students would like to express themselves in the group because they used fake names, her high level of anxiety prevented her from participating. She rarely participated whether in class or in the online group. Henceforth, although she often agreed that people should tolerate each other, and not run for judgements, it cannot be said that she developed the abilities related to ICC since none are

noticed in her behaviour or interaction be it online or in class. In her writing, grammar and vocabulary constraints can be easily noticed together with structure and organization.

Learner 116: She was a frequent participant in the online group, as she rarely absented from class. Her online participation included both posting and replying to others. However, she stopped participating during the last month of the project. In class she was an extrovert. Orally, she expressed herself in a good language, but in writing, she faced many difficulties. She manifested abilities of tolerance, awareness of one's own and others' cultural affiliations which helped her interpret behaviours and avoid judgements, and respect, value and be open towards differences. Besides, she shared her class mates' views questioning what is taken for granted. With time, her writing developed significantly, especially in terms of grammar, punctuation and structure, and vocabulary.

Learner 117: He signalled a medium participation in the online group because of a behaviour that he experienced in his interaction with a classmate (She used offensive language). Henceforth, he avoided participating frequently or interacting with all members. In class, he was always present in the discussions. With time, he showed an ability to decentre from one's own standpoints, and an awareness of the influence of cultural affiliations. These abilities were also combined with abilities to question what is taken for granted, to respect others, and to avoid stereotypes and prejudice.

Learner 118: She was a medium participant in the online group, she was a housewife with multiple responsibilities, and she lost her Facebook account many times. When participating, she only posted her point of view regarding the topic of discussion. In class, she expressed herself using a good language. Moreover, she manifested feelings of tolerance, awareness, respect, and openness towards different points of view and cultures.

Learner 119: she had not a Facebook account, henceforth she did not participate online. She lacked motivation to learn the English language because she was forced to study it. In class, she was all the time silent and she tried no efforts to improve herself. Her level did not show improvements.

Learner 120: She was a medium participant in the online discussions; her posts were either to agree or disagree with others without any significant language use or expressed ideas. In class, she lacked interest in learning and made many absences from class. When present, her contribution was medium and the language she used reflected a weak level. Throughout the whole course, no real improvements in her skills were noticed unless for abilities of tolerance, awareness and avoiding judgements.

Learner 121: She could not join Facebook because of the refusal of her family. She was shy and hesitant concerning participation in class but later she participated more. However, little improvements were noticed in terms of ICC

Learner 122: Although he had a job that he should care for, he managed to be present in class and to share his ideas with his classmates. He belongs to a family within which tenderness is not a priority which made his character different; he could not show affection or empathy, and he almost seemed to be ignorant and indifferent when others express themselves (he explained this reality in class discussions to inform his classmates that he is not arrogant but a character). Participating from time to time in the online group and in class discussions helped him to talk more about himself, his classmates understood him and started interacting with him, and he shared with them his points of view. Eventually, he developed abilities of understanding and respecting the others, decentring from one's own affiliations together with other ICC abilities.

Learner 123: She was a medium participant in the online group unlike in class. Despite the fact that she did not post in the group regularly, she used to read her mates' comments and to refer back to their ideas in class. Eventually, she showed feelings of tolerance towards differences and ambiguity, and warned against prejudgements and prejudices because they destroy relationships. However, the ability to decentre from one's own cultural affiliation and to question what is taken for granted are abilities that emerged in some situations but faded in others. In terms of grammar and vocabulary, little enhancement was signalled compared with her level at the beginning of the course. Besides, she shared the characteristic of questioning what is taken for granted and searching for different answers.

Learner 124: She was a medium participant in the online discussions; her posts were either to agree or disagree with others without any significant language use. She had many responsibilities at home which prevented her from devoting more efforts to her studies. Her contribution was medium and the language she used at the early beginning reflected a weak level. However, she showed improvements in her writing skills and those abilities of tolerance, awareness and avoiding judgements.

Learner 125: A boy who worked hard for long hours, he did not participate regularly; he continuously showed sceptical feelings towards the use of Facebook in education. In class discussions, he absented many time. Although he showed respect and openness towards others' opinions, his sense of curiosity and tolerance was restricted by his strong sense of belonging to a particular culture, besides, his linguistic skills exhibited little improvement.

Learner 126: At the beginning of the project, she was an active participant both in class and online. However, in the middle, her father died and she stopped participating for few weeks. During the last month, she participated but not with the same motivation she had before. Her absences prevented her evaluation in the same way it was done with others.

Despite this, she manifested abilities of tolerance, awareness of one's own cultural affiliations and those of others, and the dangerous affect of judgements on relationships.

4.3. Summary of the Results

The observation of the participants throughout the project resulted in dividing them into three main groups. The first group consisted of those students who frequently participated in the facebook group i.e. they regularly posted comments on the weekly designed topics, they interacted with their mates, and replied or responded to their mates' posts. The second group of learners are medium participants; they participated but not in all the topics, and their participation was characterized by posting only comments without getting into a serious interaction, conversation or discussion with others. The third group of learners are those who never participated.

The number of students who shared the characteristics of the first group is 57 students. The analysis and interpretation of their behaviours, both inside the class and online, revealed that these learners showed noticeable improvements regarding the different components and abilities that constitute the ICC, more particularly, the abilities manifested in the operational definition adopted for the study.

For the first component 'attitudes', frequent participants expressed increasingly their respect towards others who are different from them in thoughts and cultural backgrounds, they further showed curiosity to learn about them, and seek opportunities to engage and cooperate with them - be they Algerians from other subcultures, Algerians who experienced living abroad, or Brazilians -. These learners eventually developed the skill of thinking critically, they often referred to it as essential, and asked their classmates to question what is taken for granted as 'normal' because a big part of behaviours is conditioned by cultural background unconsciously. This awareness helped them recognize

that others' behaviours are also based on different cultural affiliations that they do not know, henceforth, they should not judge people until they know them. In other words, they developed an ability to tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty.

Asking others about their culture, talking about one's own culture or subculture, and comparing between them aided learners to gain cultural knowledge related to other's beliefs, values... together with interaction processes be they cultural, societal or individual. They became able to come over generalising stereotypes and prejudices and to recognize and understand internal diversity that exists within cultures including their own. This increasingly developed awareness of others' and one's own culture affiliations promoted their understanding of the influence of culture on one's life, behaviours, and way of thinking. Although sometimes these learners expressed that they did not like the fact that the same ideas are repeated, they expressed their understanding that they share the same ideas, and they appreciated expressing the same idea differently using personal language style and vocabulary. These abilities related to the ICC component of knowledge and understanding were among the most prominent abilities that this group of learners had developed throughout the project.

Regarding the fact that the components of ICC are not completely separate, instead, they are related and interlinked to each other, frequent participants developed the various ICC skills that include decentring from one's own perspective, interpreting and relating, empathy, cognitive flexibility and critical evaluation of others behaviours, practices... In this sense, the analysis of their linguistic and sociolinguistic skills revealed a noticeable enhancement. Moreover, acting as a mediator is a skill that characterized these frequent participants but not others.

Comparing frequent participants to less regular ones, it was found that the last ICC component of 'actions' made the difference between them. In other words, frequent participants were consistent in seeking opportunities to engage with the Brazilians, whereby they interacted and communicated appropriately. Moreover, when distributing the project work, frequent participants showed their willingness to cooperate, share and discuss different critical topics through which they could challenge attitudes and behaviours.

The number of students that can be attributed to the second group is 65 participants. This group of learners showed also improvements regarding the different ICC abilities. In this respect, they showed noticeable development in most of the abilities related to the three ICC components; attitudes, cultural knowledge and understanding and skills. It was noticed that some other abilities, like questioning what is taken for granted as 'normal' and decentring from one's own cultural affiliations, were not developed or at the early beginning of development. However, the last component's abilities and actions were less developed compared to the frequent participants; frequent participants showed more tendency to seek opportunities to engage with other people who have different affiliations, to interact and discuss with them with them challenging topics. Learner 15, 24, 43 and 44 presented exceptions in that these learners showed some ICC abilities resulted from their life experiences, but they showed no significant development i.e. their ICC level was almost the same throughout the project.

The number of students within the third group is 04; they never participated because they did not join Facebook. These students shared almost the same description. They only developed some cultural knowledge and understanding that helped them overcome some negative attitudes. This ability could be gained from the class discussion;

the latter was a reflection on the former. Most of them were not motivated to learn English either because they do not like it; they were obliged to study it, or because of the diplomat status; their chance to find a job is weak.

Besides the consideration of the ICC skills, other behaviours occurred. The latter could be summarized in the shy learners' tendency to participate online, and eventually they became active contributors in class. These shy learners belong to either the first group of frequent participants or the second group of medium participants. However, the case of learner 33 and 115 cannot be neglected; i.e. suffering from a high level of debilitating anxiety prevented them from participating both in class and online. The project could not help them overcome such problem.

Despite the fact that the project focused on the development of ICC, learners showed their satisfaction towards the impact of the project on their writing skill. In other words, feedback, self correction, peer correction, and awareness of once own level together with comparing it to those of others are behaviours that emerged in the online group, and in class assignments, and helped them develop their writing skill.

All in all, the development of the ICC abilities varied from one learner to the other. However, frequent participants showed more improvement than medium participants, and the latter were better than rare or none participants. Besides ICC development, other benefits related to decreasing shyness and anxiety, and increasing self-confidence together with the writing skill emerged.

Conclusion

This chapter presented the analysis of the results gained from the participants' observation. Since a detailed description of the learners' behaviours in each online and class discussions is not possible within the confines of the present study, the analysis addressed the global behaviour of learners and their development individually, then a summary of the results was provided. Besides these qualitative findings, a questionnaire was used as a pre-test and post-test to collect quantitative data. The next chapter will shed light on these quantitative results.

Chapter Five: The Analysis of the Questionnaire

Introduction

This chapter aims at shedding light on the quantitative data gained from the use of a questionnaire as a pre-test and a post-test to assess learners' ICC level before and after the project. The main points that are dealt with when analysing the questionnaire include finding out its reliability, its validity and some descriptive statistics. The latter cover frequencies, the mean, the range, and standard deviation. They are applied with the pre-test, the post-test of students who were part of the project, as well for those who were not (those in Mila) to pave the way for a comparison to take place.

5.1. Validity

The questionnaire's validity is "the extent to which a psychometric instrument measures what it has been designed to measure" (Dörnyei, 2003 p. 110). Internal structure or 'construct validity' is an important aspect of validity that assesses the extent to which the items correspond to each other. Most commonly it is measured using 'Factor Analysis' which should be above 0.5.

Analysing the internal structure of a number of ICC assessment tools, Griffiths et.al. (2016) reported that the 'Assessment of Intercultural Competence' (AIC) developed by Fantini and Tirmizi (2006) was proved to have a multidimensional structure i.e. most items belonging to the three components: attitudes, skills and awareness provided evidence to load onto a single factor.

For the present study, the adopted questionnaire's construct validity was assessed using the SPSS. There were 126 complete questionnaire responses for the pre-test, and for the post-test. Verifying the construct validity, a principal components analysis was

conducted using direct oblimin for oblique rotation. The results revealed that the 'Factor Analysis' was appropriate with $KMO=0.873$, and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity= 0.000 . However, the determinant was less than 0.00001 .

5.2. Reliability

Reliability can be defined as "the extent to which scores on the instrument are free from errors of measurement" (Dörnyei, 2003 p. 110). It is much more reflected in internal consistency reliability which is measured by the 'Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient' (α should be between 0 and +1). Alpha should not be less than 0.60 if a reliable questionnaire is aimed at (ibid).

Reporting the reliability of the 'Assessment of Intercultural Competence (AIC)' developed by Fantini and Tirmizi (2006), different scores were found by different researchers. Some findings are demonstrated in the following table:

Table 09.

Overview of the AIC reliability.

Overall reliability	Subscale reliability	Researchers
$\alpha= 0.824$	$\alpha= 0.86- 0.98$	Fantini & Tirmizi, 2006 (Cited in Griffiths et.al. 2016)
/	$\alpha= 0.59- 0.73$	Almeida, Simões,& Costa, 2012 (cited in Griffiths et.al. 2016)
$\alpha= 0.94$	$\alpha= 0.86- 0.96$	CZervionka et.al., 2014

For the present research, the SPSS analysis revealed that the subscale reliability related to the first component 'Knowledge' was 0.80, the subscale reliability related to the second component 'attitudes' was 0.89, the subscale reliability related to the third component 'skills' was 0.86, the subscale reliability related to the fourth component 'awareness' was 0.85, and the overall reliability was found $\alpha = 0.95$. Henceforth, no item is deleted because all items proved to have a high reliability, from one hand, and contributed in providing a high overall reliability from the other. The overall and subscales reliability are demonstrated in detail in the following tables.

Table 10.

The Reliability scores.

Components	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
Knowledge	,808	,812	11
Attitudes	,896	,899	13
Skills	,868	,869	11
Awareness	,852	,854	12
Overall ICC	,951	,952	47

5.3. Descriptive Statistics of the Pre-Test

This kind of statistics is used to summarise numerical data and helps researchers to save time and energy. In the present study, these statistics cover the frequencies, the mean, the range, and standard deviation in an attempt to attain a well rounded description.

5.3.1. Frequencies

This type of analysis is applied with the three first elements of the questionnaire; the age of respondents, the period of their Facebook use, and the purpose behind having Facebook accounts.

Table 11.

The Age of the Participants

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 22-25	118	93,7	93,7	93,7
26-30	5	4,0	4,0	97,6
31- 40	2	1,6	1,6	99,2
+ 40	1	,8	,8	100,0
Total	126	100,0	100,0	

The results shown in the table indicate that the vast majority of learners belong to the same generation; their age ranges from 22 to 30 years old (97.7%). This generation is generally known to have a strong connection with technology in general, and with social media in particular. However, three respondents' age ranges from 31 to more than 40 years old, representing (2.4%); they are elder than the others and may be they are not keen on technology and social media as they may not support the use of social media in education.

Table 12.

Participants Usage of Facebook

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
none	6	4,8	4,8	4,8
1- 12 months	14	11,1	11,1	15,9
Valid 1-5 years	102	81,0	81,0	96,8
more than 5 years	4	3,2	3,2	100,0
Total	126	100,0	100,0	

The period during which learners have been using Facebook would implicitly show two main things; first, learners' relation to social media i.e. a long period means that Facebook became a part of the learners' social life and experience. Second, a long period of use means a good mastery of the tool. The results in the table show that 106 students (84.2%) have been using facebook for more than one year, 14 students (11.1%) have been using facebook for less than one year, while only 6 learners did not use it at all. These results would support the use of the tool in the project since it is one that learners are familiar with i.e. it is a part of their social life, and they master its use. The latter would help overcome shortcomings related to the lack of knowledge and appropriate use of the tool when dealing with the project. For the 6 learners who had never got a facebook account, it would be easier to teach them how to use it by the teacher, as they could benefit from their mates' experience.

Table 13.

Participants' Purposes Behind Facebook Use

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
education	18	14,3	14,3	14,3
chat	80	63,5	63,5	77,8
make friends	6	4,8	4,8	82,5
entertainment	7	5,6	5,6	88,1
Valid get information	4	3,2	3,2	91,3
none	11	8,7	8,7	100,0
Total	126	100,0	100,0	

The students have been using Facebook for different reasons. These reasons appeared to fit into six main groups. A look at the cumulative percentage would make it easy to realise that students often mentioned more than one reason for their Facebook use; the majority use it for chat (77.8%), making friends (82.5%), entertainment (88.1%), and getting information (91.3%). However, only 18 students out of 126 representing (14.3%) use it for education. Besides, 11 students did not mention any purpose; six of them did not have a Facebook account and this explains the absence of any reasons, but for the others (05), it can be explained by their curiosity to have an account just because almost all their peers do.

5.3.2. Range, Mean and Standard Deviation

After analysing learners' responses to the first elements addressing personal information, their ICC level with its subcomponents is shown next through the description of the range, the mean and standard deviation.

Table 14.

The descriptive statistics of the pre-test

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
knowledge	126	2,64	,73	3,36	2,1941	,65033
attitude	126	3,69	,54	4,23	2,5617	,75834
skills	126	3,73	,55	4,27	2,5014	,71810
Awareness	126	3,75	,58	4,33	2,5225	,69197
Overall ICC	126	2,96	,68	3,64	2,4515	,61799

On a five point scale, learners scored differently. This difference is evident not only in the overall ICC level, but within the subcomponents too. Although some learners scored high in the different ICC subcomponents, it is important to mention that it does not mean that the same student get these high cores, may be different students got high scores in one component but not in others. Moreover, low scores are also found. The final overall ICC mean is 2.45, it reflects the different means calculated for the four subcomponent (knowledge: 2.19, attitudes: 2.56, skills: 2.50, and awareness: 2.52). The standard deviation indicates how much the scores depart from the mean. The small standard deviation signalled in the subcomponents (knowledge SD= 0.65, attitudes SD= 0.75, skills SD= 0.71, and awareness SD= 0.69) together with the standard deviation found for the

overall ICC and which equals 0.61 indicate that the students' scores are close to the mean.

In other words, scores which are very high or very low compared to the mean are rare, this is further shown by the curve in the following chart.

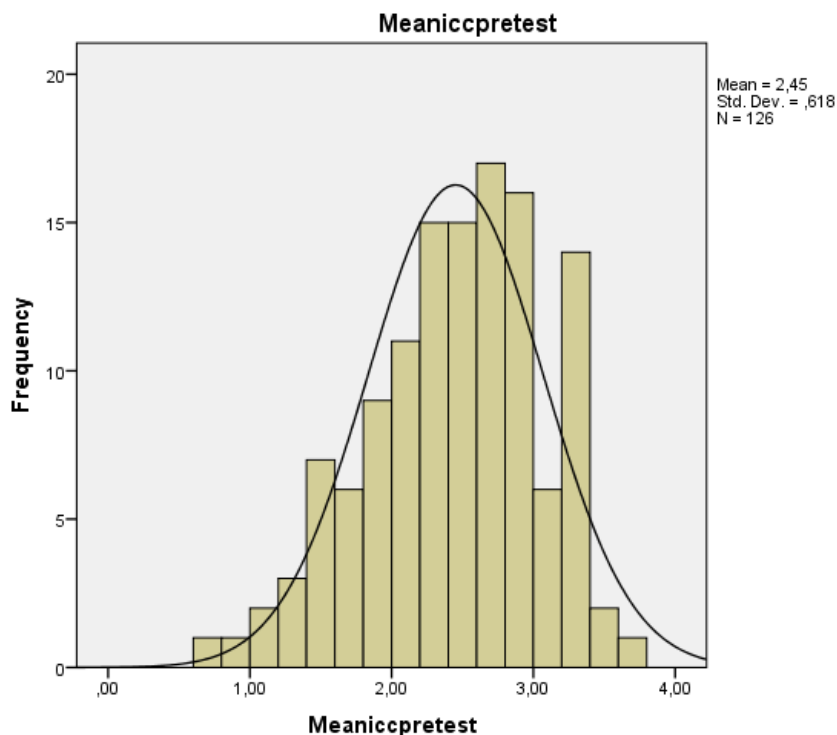


Figure 09. The mean of the pre-test scores

5.4. Descriptive Statistics of the Post-test

The same steps followed in the analysis of the pre-test are followed in the analysis of the post-test starting with the frequencies , then moving to counting the range, the mean and standard deviation.

5.4.1. Frequencies

Table 15.

The Participants' age

	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
22-25	118	93,7	93,7
26-30	5	4,0	97,6
31- 40	2	1,6	99,2
+ 40	1	,8	100,0
Total	126	100,0	

Compared to the pre-test, the learners' age kept the same categories and the same percentage for each category. This is logical since learners' pre-test and post-test took place at the same academic year.

Table 16.

Participants' use of Facebook

	Frequency	Valid Percent
None	04	3,17
1- 12 months	11	8,7
1-5 years	107	84,92
More than 5years	04	3,17

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Total	126	100,0
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Considering the Facebook use reported by learners, it can be noticed that 04 learners have never used it, however, the others have been using it for different periods of time, ranging from few months to more than five years. Comparing these results to those of the pre-test, it can be said that two learners joined their mates and started using Facebook while the other four learners did not.

Table 17.

Participants purpose for Facebook use

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Education	10	7,9	7,9	7,9
chat and making friends	2	1,6	1,6	9,5
Valid education and chatting	108	85,7	85,7	95,2
None	6	4,8	4,8	100,0
Total	126	100,0	100,0	

The results in the table show that the vast majority of the students mentioned that they use Facebook for education together with other purposes i.e. education (7.9%), education and chat (95.2%). Six learners out of 126 reported that they do not have any purpose; four of these are those who do not use it or do not have an account at all as shown in the previous table.

5.4.2. Range, Mean and Standard Deviation

The descriptive statistics of the post test cover the range with the minimum and the maximum scores, the mean and the standard deviation.

Table 18.

The descriptive statistics of the post test.

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Post-test knowledge	126	2,55	1,91	4,45	2,9336	,52764
Post-test attitudes	126	3,31	1,46	4,77	3,4505	,70647
Post-test skills	126	2,73	1,82	4,55	3,3203	,60986
Post-test awareness	126	2,92	2,00	4,92	3,4802	,65196
Post-test ICC	126	2,66	1,91	4,57	3,3067	,55301
Valid N (listwise)	126					

The results in the table 18 indicate that the students' performance related to the subcomponent awareness gained the highest score with a mean of 3.48, followed by the attitudes with 3.45 and skills with 3.32. The knowledge subcomponent gained the least mean which equals 2.93. For the overall ICC, the mean is 3.30, with a standard deviation of 0.57 which means that the majority of the students' scores are around the mean, although the range is a bit large. The latter indicates that very few students had very high or very low scores compared to the mean. The following figures manifest the difference in learners' performance related to the four subcomponents and the overall ICC in details.

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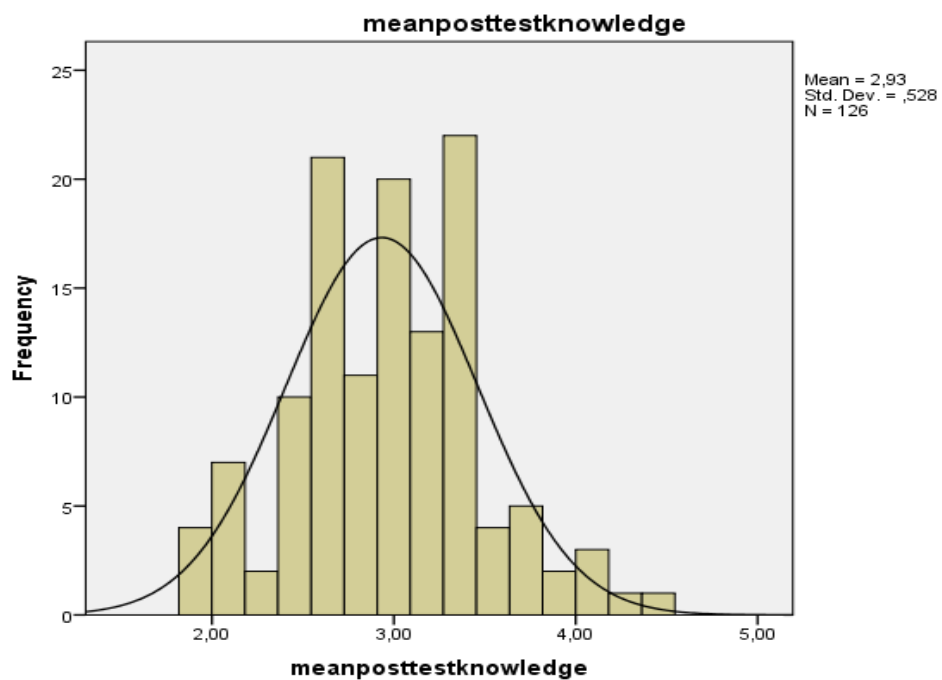


Figure 10. The mean of the post-test/ knowledge scores

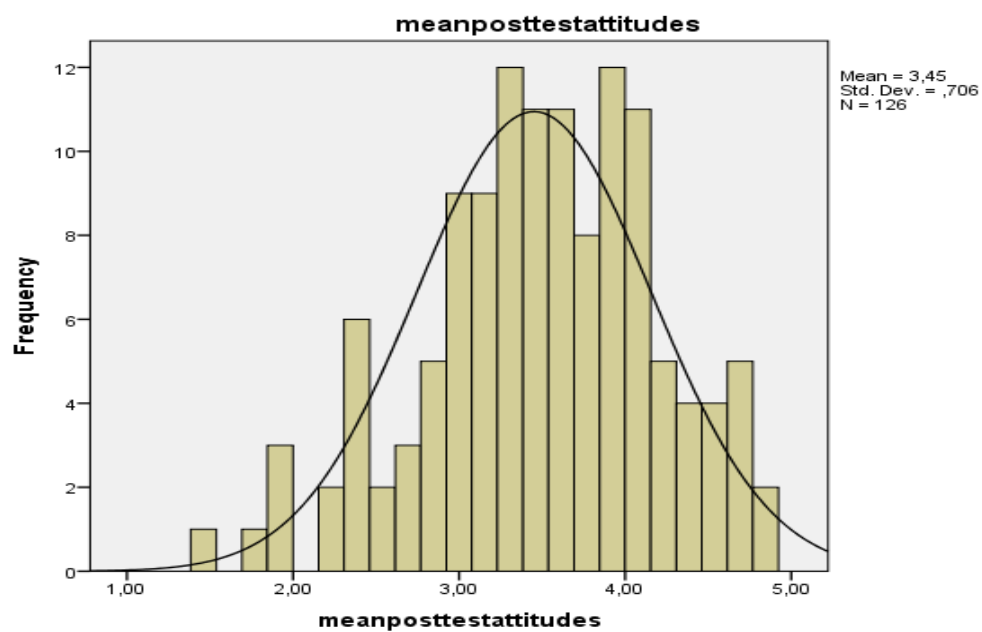


Figure 11. The mean of the post-test/ attitudes scores

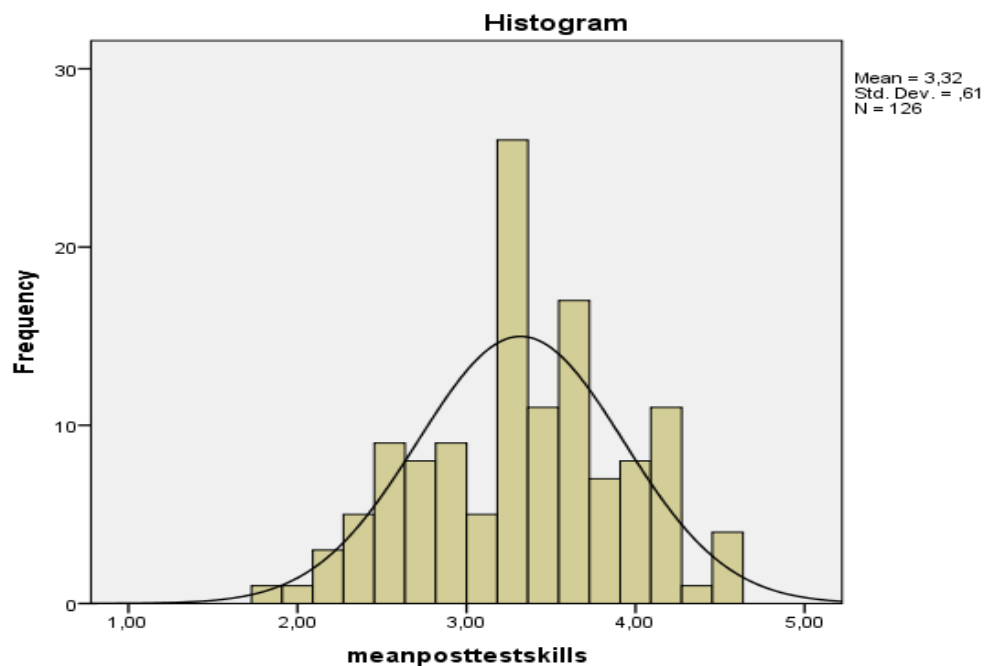


Figure 12. The mean of the post-test/ skills scores

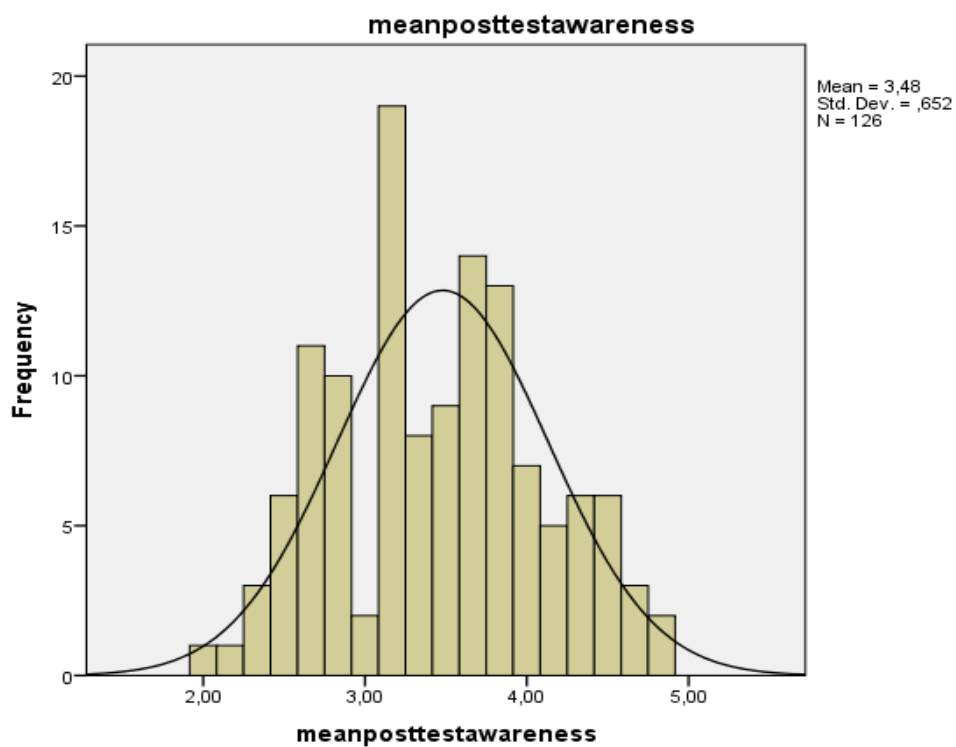


Figure 13. The mean of the post-test/awareness score

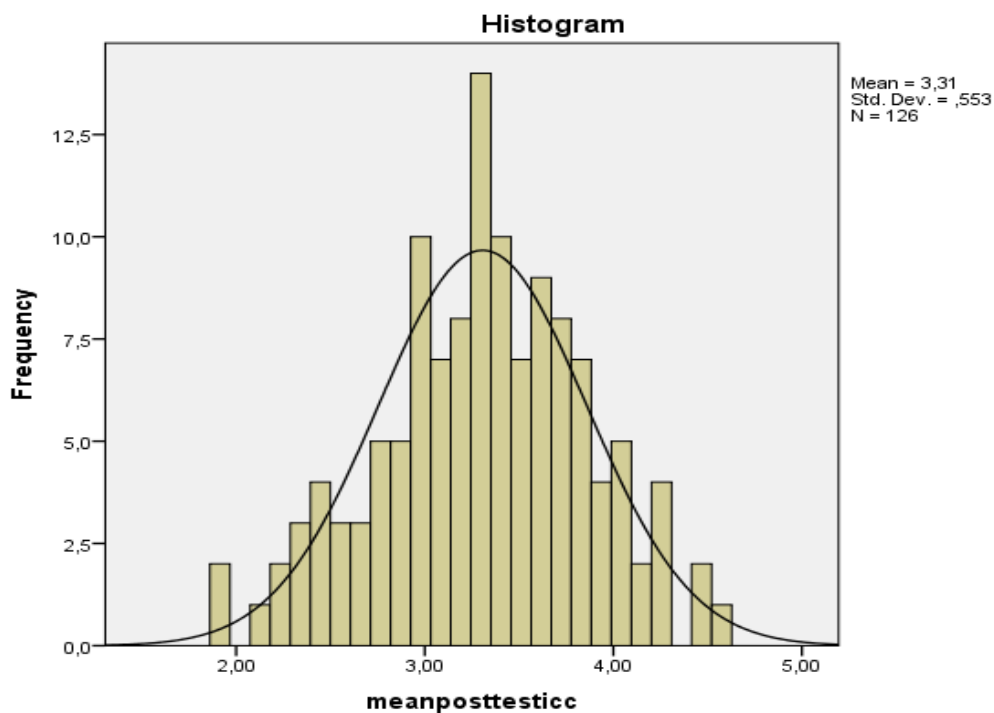


Figure 14. The mean of the ICC scores in the post-test

5.5. Comparing the Pre-test and Post-test Results

To check the effectiveness of the teaching method applied, the scores of participants in the pre-test and the post test should be compared. The difference between the pre-test and the post-test results are summarised in the following table and graph.

Table 19.

The pre-test and the post-test descriptive statistics.

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-test knowledge	126	2,64	,73	3,36	2,1941	,65033
Post-test knowledge	126	2,55	1,91	4,45	2,9336	,52764

FACEBOOK AND EFL LEARNERS' INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

Pre-test attitudes	126	3,69	,54	4,23	2,5617	,75834
Post-test attitudes	126	3,31	1,46	4,77	3,4505	,70647
Pre-test skills	126	3,73	,55	4,27	2,5014	,71810
Post-test skills	126	2,73	1,82	4,55	3,3203	,60986
Pre-test awareness	126	3,75	,58	4,33	2,5225	2,5225
Post-test awareness	126	2,92	2,00	4,92	3,4802	,65196
Pre-test ICC	126	2,96	,68	3,64	2,4515	,61799
Post-test ICC	126	2,66	,91	4,57	3,3067	,55301

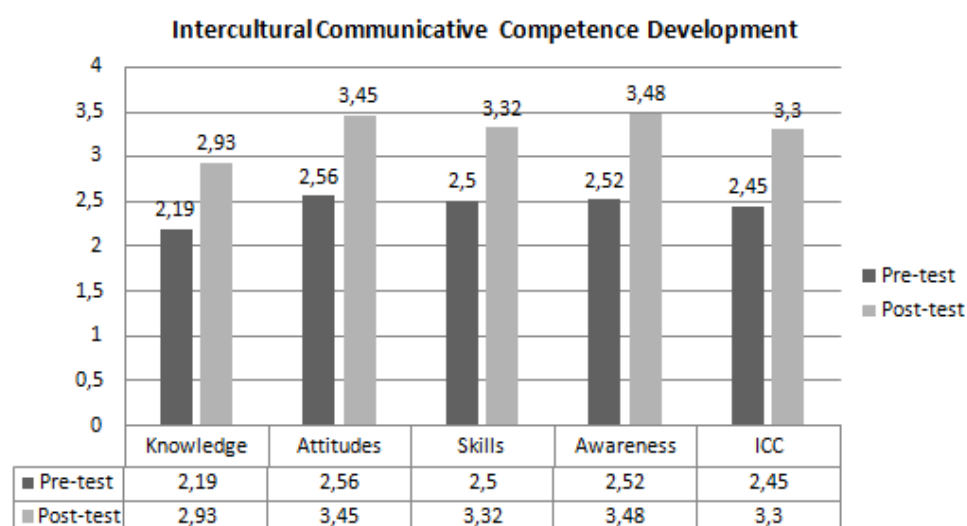


Figure 15. The pre-test and the post-test descriptive statistics

Considering the knowledge subcomponent, it is noticed that the minimum and the maximum scores as well as the mean increased, while standard deviation decreased. That is to say, the learners' performance related to this subcomponent developed in comparison to their performance in the pre-test, or before the project. Shedding light on the skills subcomponent revealed that the minimum and the maximum scores improved (from 0.55

to 1.82 for the minimum and from 4.27 to 4.55 for the maximum), with a large range of 6.73. This result means that some students scored much better than others but still the number of students who scored high and those who scored low is not very big because the standard deviation is 0.76 for a mean of 3.35 i.e. since the standard deviation is small, the vast majority of learners' scores are close to the mean. For the other subcomponent 'attitudes', an increase is noticed in the minimum scores (from 0.54 to 1.46), there is also an improvement in the maximum scores (from 4.27 to 4.77), but the range decreased from 3.69 to 3.31. The improvements in learners' performance related to the attitudes is signalled by a mean of 3.45 which is better than theirs in the pre-test (2.56), and similarly the standard deviation equals 0.70 i.e. their performance is close to the mean. For the last subcomponent 'awareness', both the minimum and the maximum scores increased, but the range decreased. The explanation that can be provided for this result is that learners' performance became close to each other. The mean increased from 2.52 to 3.48 and the standard deviation decreased from 0.69 to 0.65. The improvement in the students' performance in the four components is reflected in the overall ICC level as shown in the table 19. The minimum score improved from 0.68 to 1.91, the maximum score increased to 4.57 instead of 3.64 in the pre-test, the mean reached 3.31 instead of 2.45 in the pre-test.

To sum up, the analysis of the learners' age and Facebook use revealed that the vast majority of learners belong to the so-called 'the Net generation' (McBride,2009 p.37); social media became a part of their social everyday life. Comparing their answers in the pre-test and the post-test, it was noticed that the use of Facebook for educational purposes increased to 95%. The scores that learners reported in both the pre-test and the post-test reflect their levels of performance related to four subcomponents of the ICC, and indicate their overall ICC performance. The comparison of the students' performance guided by their range, mean, and standard deviation revealed that there was an enhancement in their

performance in the four subcomponents, and consequently, in their ICC level. However, it was noticed that the knowledge subcomponent scores were less than those of the other subcomponents. Moreover, small standard deviation scores were signaled for all the four subcomponents and the overall ICC which reveals a close level in the students' performance, although the range in some cases was large (like the case of skills).

The difference in the learners' performance is counted by subtracting the pre-test scores from the post-test scores. The difference marked for the first subcomponent 'knowledge' is 0.74. It is 0.89 for the 'attitudes', 0.82 for the skills, and 0.96 for awareness. For the overall ICC, the difference is 0.85. Although the comparison between the learners' scores in the pre-test and the post-test revealed that there is an enhancement in their ICC level in general, we cannot deny that the observation revealed that some learners participated more frequently than others in the online project, although they all showed improvements related to the ICC abilities. This fact pushed the researcher to wonder whether the overall enhancement found is achieved by the frequent participants or by both frequent and non-frequent participants. Henceforth, the results of the two groups have to be compared to answer this question. To further check the significance of the project and exclude extra variables that may cause such enhancement, like having a module that aims at teaching culture and interculturality, a third group of non-participants is added for the comparison.

5.6. The Comparative Study

Reconsidering the results of the participant observation, and which revealed that learners divided into two main groups- those who participated frequently and those who did not- raised a necessity for a further detailed comparison of the learners' questionnaire scores. Henceforth, the researcher found it necessary to divide the learners into two groups;

frequent and non-frequent participants, then compare their scores in the pre-test and the post-test, and with each other. Furthermore, a third group of non-participants is added for further explanation, comparison and evidence. The latter is the group of 'Master one' students at the University Centre of Mila; they did not participate in the Facebook group project at all. This triple comparison would take into consideration the mean, the range and standard deviation scores of each group (frequent participants, non-frequent participants, and non-participants) in both the pre-test and post-test, the scores of each single group in the pre-test and post-test are compared, then the scores of the three groups are compared to each other. The number of students within each group is displayed in the following table:

Table 20.

The number of students within the three groups

	Frequency	Valid Percent
group 1	57	35,6
group 2	65	40,6
group 3	38	23,8
Total	160	100,0

This division is based on the participants' observation ; the number of frequent participants is 57 students, the non-frequent participants are 65 (moderate and rare participants as described in the observation), and those non –participants i.e. those who did not participate in the project at all are 38 students; 34 students are Master One students who belonged to the University Centre of Mila, while 04 students are Master One students who belong to the University of Jijel; they are the students who did not participate in the

project because they did not have a Facebook account, besides, their participation in class was very rare. The vast majority of the students are females; there are only three males in the frequent participants group, six in the non-frequent participants and six in the non-participant group.

5.6.1. Frequent Participant Group

This group constitutes of 57 Master One students whose age ranges from 22 to more than 40 years old, they have been using Facebook for at least few months. Comparing the pre-test and the post test scores of the first group resulted in the following table:

Table 21.

Paired samples statistics for group one

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Mean Error
Pair 1	Pre-test knowledge	2,3014	57	,62114	,08227
	Post-test knowledge	3,0510	57	,50733	,06720
Pair 2	Pre-test attitudes	2,7814	57	,63245	,08377
	Post-test attitudes	3,6397	57	,59870	,07930
Pair 3	Pre-test skills	2,7097	57	,66836	,08853
	Post-test skills	3,5104	57	,89942	,11913
Pair 4	Pre-test awareness	2,7573	57	,55730	,07382
	Post-test awareness	3,6301	57	,59865	,07929
Pair 5	Pre-test ICC	2,6461	57	,52464	,06949
	Post-test ICC	3,4692	57	,54480	,07216

The results show that there is an overall improvement in the learners' performance related to ICC; the mean calculated for their post-test reached 3.46 compared with a 2.64 mean in the pre-test. The development touched all the four subcomponents of the ICC. The knowledge subcomponent signalled a 0.75 difference (3.05-2.30), the attitudes difference was 0.85 (3.63- 2.78), the skills' difference is 0.81 (3.51-2.70), and the last subcomponents 'awareness' got a 0.88 mean difference (3.63- 2.75). Although learners' development is noticed within all the ICC subcomponents, the least difference is found with the knowledge subcomponent (0.75). This difference is further clarified in the following chart.

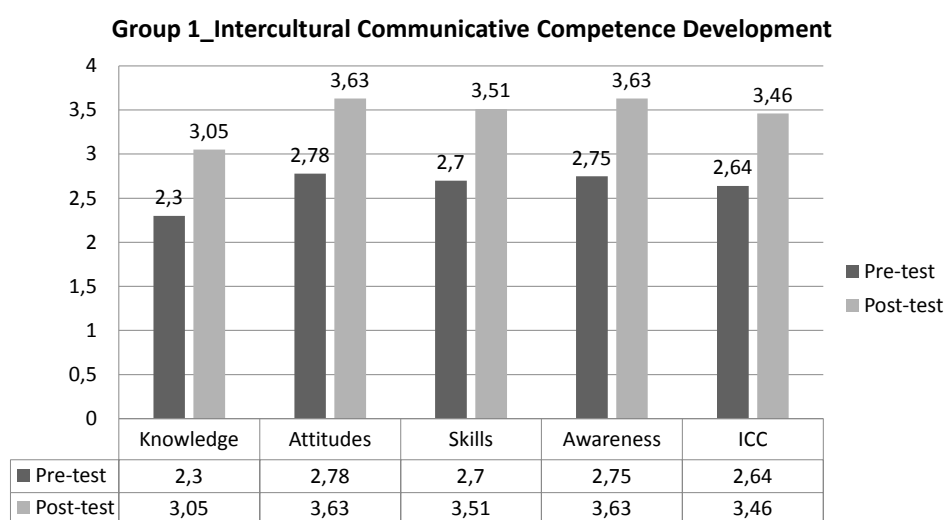


Figure 16. The development of ICC within the frequent participants

The results in the table and the chart represent the development of the first group as a whole, however, individuals in the group did not report the same level; the students differ from one to another. The following chart manifests in detail the development of each individual in the first group.

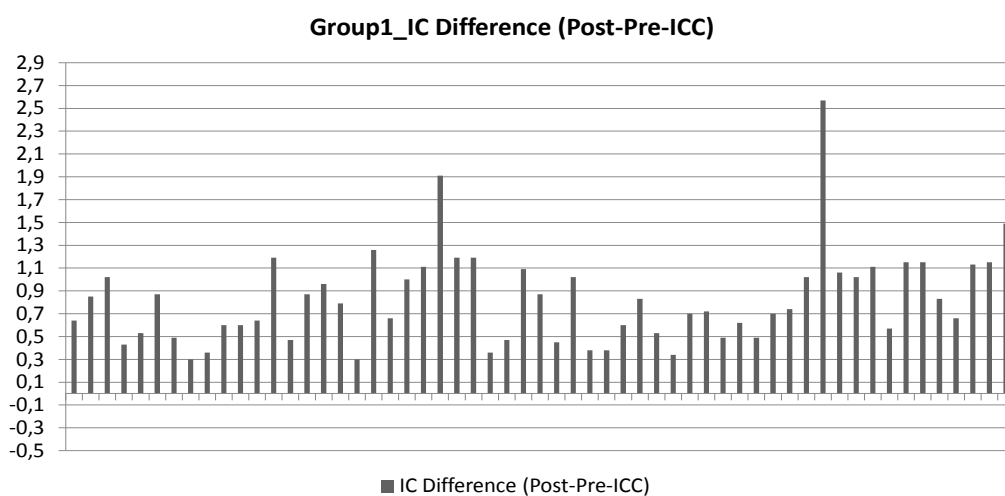


Figure 17. Individual development of ICC within the frequent participants

Learners in this group reported different degrees of ICC enhancement. The least difference of development, as noticed in the chart, is 0.30 and it is marked by few learners (03), the others marked larger difference. The most developed student marked a difference of more than 2.5. Hence, difference within this group ranges from 0.3 to 2.5, but the highest score 2.5 was achieved only by one learner, followed by another who scored 1.9, and the rest scores ranged from 0.3 to 1.5.

5.6.2. Non-Frequent Participant Group

This group involves 65 'Master One' students whose age ranges from 22 to 35 years old, the vast majority in this group is familiar with the use of Facebook since they have been using it for at least few months. Comparing the pre-test and the post-test scores of the second group resulted in the following table:

Table 22.

Paired samples statistics for group two

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre-test knowledge	2,1301	65	,66668	,08269
	Post-test knowledge	2,8755	65	,50631	,06280
Pair 2	Pre-test attitudes	2,4237	65	,79257	,09831
	Post-test attitudes	3,3586	65	,70374	,08729
Pair 3	Pre-test skills	2,3636	65	,71238	,08836
	Post-test skills	3,2755	65	,58541	,07261
Pair 4	Pre-test awareness	2,3526	65	,73225	,09082
	Post-test awareness	3,3936	65	,64693	,08024
Pair 5	Pre-test ICC	2,3227	65	,63557	,07883
	Post-test ICC	3,2350	65	,52729	,06540

Similarly, this group witnessed an ICC development that covers all the four subcomponents. The difference counted for the first subcomponent 'knowledge' is 0.74. For the second component 'attitudes', difference reached 0.93. The third subcomponent 'skills', and the fourth 'awareness' marked 0.91 and 1.04 difference respectively.

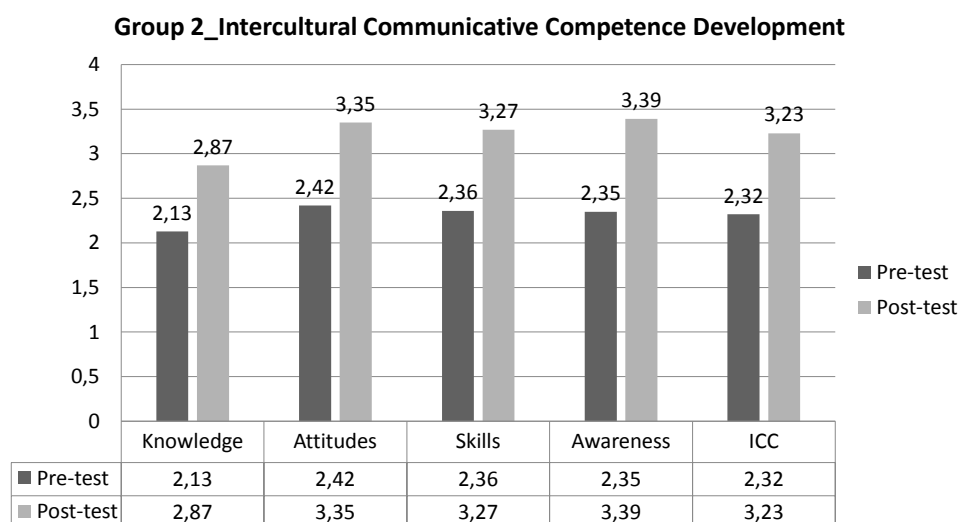


Figure 18. The development of ICC within the non-frequent participants

Although the students in the second group reported enhancement in the all four ICC components, and in the overall ICC scoring a 0.91 difference, it is noticed that the fourth subcomponent 'awareness' got the highest difference score followed by attitudes, skills and last knowledge. These results describe the second group overall level, however, the individual ICC growth within this group is demonstrated through the use of the following graph.

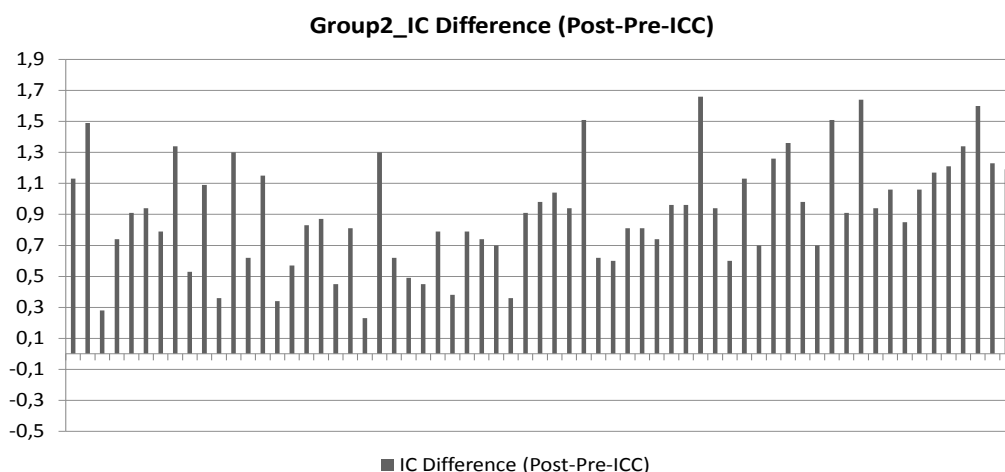


Figure 19. Individual development of ICC within the non-frequent participants

In this group, the least mean score counted for difference is 0.23, and it is marked by only one learner. The majority of learners reported a difference that is higher than 0.5, a considerable number of students got a mean of difference that is higher than 1.00, while the highest difference score is more than 1.6. The difference within this group ranges from 0.23 to 1.66.

5.6.3. Non-Participant Group

This third group consists of 38 'Master One' students, 34 belong to the University Centre of Mila, their ages, Facebook use, and the purpose of such use are manifested in the following tables respectively.

*Table 23.**The Age of group three students.*

	Frequency	Valid Percent
22-25	28	82,4
26-30	3	8,8
31- 40	1	2,9
+ 40	2	5,9
Total	34	100,0

The majority of the students' age within this third group belongs to the first category (22-25 years old), only three learners' age is more than 30 years old. Thus, it can be claimed that the students within the three groups belong to the same generation, and to the same geographical area since Jijel and Mila shared confines as they share a lot in terms of culture. Moreover, 'Master One' students at the department of English Letters and languages at the University Centre of Mila and those at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia/ Jijel study the same modules and content (Canvas).

*Table 24.**The Facebook use*

	Frequency	Valid Percent
none	9	26,5
1- 12 months	1	2,9

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1-5 years	19	55,9
more than 5 years	5	14,7
Total	34	100,0

The results in the table indicate that the majority of the students at the University Centre of Mila have a Facebook account, they are familiar with it since 24 students out of 34 have been using it for more than one year. However, 09 students admitted that they did not use it.

Table 25.

The purpose behind Facebook use

	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
education	15	44,1	44,1
chat	3	8,8	52,9
entertainment	4	11,8	64,7
get information	1	2,9	67,6
none	11	32,4	100,0
Total	34	100,0	

Analysing the purpose behind which learners within this group use Facebook, chat, entertainment and getting information are the reasons that gained the highest percentages (52.9%, 64.7%, 67.6%). Besides, almost half of the group members (15 students, 44.1%) claimed to use Facebook for education. However, 11 students gave no reason for the use of

Facebook; these include the 09 students who do not have an account at all together with two other students.

After comparing the pre-test and the post test scores, the results of these 34 learners together with the 04 learners in Jijel who did not participate in the project (total of 38) are described in the following table:

Table 26.

Paired samples statistics for the third group

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Mean Error
Pair 1	Pre-test knowledge	2,2273	38	,58181	,09438
	Post-test knowledge	2,4115	38	,47532	,07711
Pair 2	Pre-test attitudes	2,7429	38	,75184	,12196
	Post-test attitudes	2,8381	38	,65633	,10647
Pair 3	Pre-test skills	2,8014	38	,77798	,12620
	Post-test skills	2,9211	38	,64427	,10451
Pair 4	Pre-test awareness	2,6316	38	,68572	,11124
	Post-test awareness	2,7412	38	,59237	,09609
Pair 5	Pre-test ICC	2,6075	38	,59436	,09642
	Post-test ICC	2,7329	38	,48801	,07917

Comparing the means gained for the pre-test and the post-test scores, it can be noticed that there is a slight positive difference. In other words, counting the difference between the pre-test mean and the post-test mean gives us 0.19 for the first subcomponent 'knowledge', 0.09 for the second subcomponent 'attitudes', 0.12 for the third

subcomponent 'skills', and 0.11 for the last subcomponent 'awareness'. The difference counted for the overall ICC enhancement is 0.13.

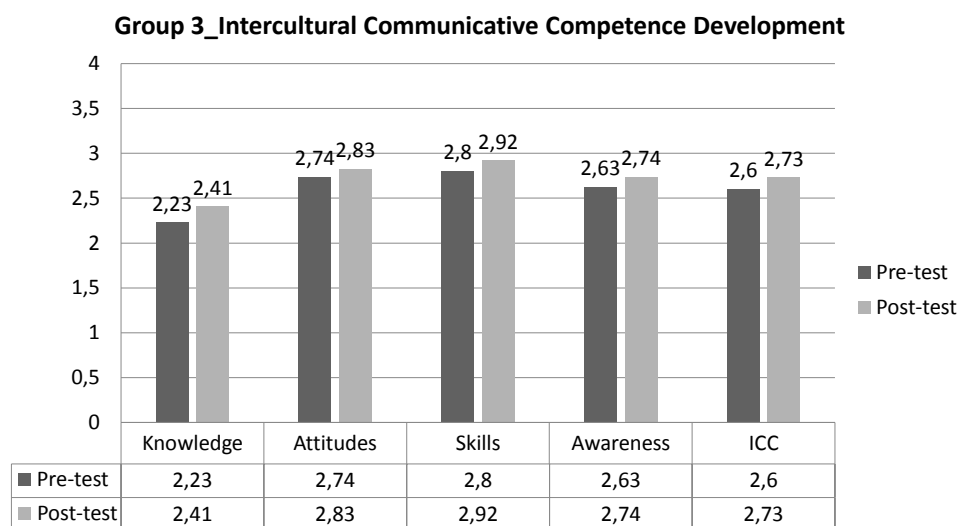


Figure 20. The development of ICC within the non-participants

Furthermore, this slight growth in ICC level reflects the whole group performance. That is to say, it is of salient importance to find out whether all group members witnessed slight improvement, or improvement is limited to some of them. The following graph describes individual ICC growth within this group.

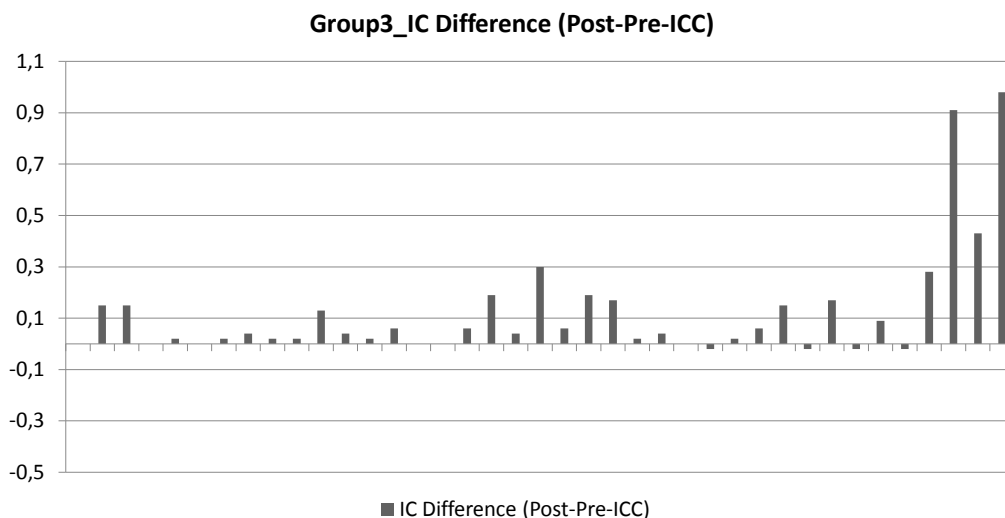


Figure 21. The individual development of ICC within the non-participants

It can be noticed from the graph that the vast majority of learners in this group did not experience a significant ICC growth. Four students scored in the pre-test better than the post-test; their difference mean equals -0.02. Six students did not signal any change marking 0.00 difference. 23 students marked a mean difference that is less than 0.2 and which is very small. Only two learners scored a difference mean that is close to 1.00. The difference mean in this group ranges from -0.02 to 0.98. Although these learners studied a module that deals with culture in the first semester, and another that addresses interculturality and multiculturalism in the second semester, their ICC development is not significant.

5.6.4. Comparing the Three Groups

The three groups of students consist of members whose age ranges from 22 to more than 40 years old. The majority of them belong to the first category (22-25). The female members outnumbered the males in the three groups. The majority of the students have

Facebook accounts and they are familiar with its use. Thus, it can be said that the three groups are similar in terms of composition.

In the pre-test, the three groups mentioned different reasons for the Facebook use including chat, entertainment, making friends, getting information, and education. The percentage that describes these reasons was high for the first four reasons when compared to that of education. This observation is valid for the three groups in the pre-test. However, the same observation is realised for group three in the post-test, while the students in group one and two (frequent and non-frequent participants) reported a high percentage to describe the use of Facebook for educational purposes.

For ICC growth, the first and the second group students i.e. those who participated in the telecollaborative project scored better than the students of the third group. This growth is proved through calculating the mean of the ICC and the subcomponents, comparing the means, and finding out the difference. These results are summarised in the table below.

Table 27.

Comparing the results of the three groups

		Mean	Mean	Mean
		Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Knowledge	Pre-test	2.30	2.13	2.22
	Post-test	3.05	2.87	2.41
Difference		0.75	0.74	0.19
Attitudes	Pre-test	2.78	2.42	2.74
	Post-test	3.63	3.35	2.83
Difference		0.85	0.93	0.09
Skills	Pre-test	2.70	2.36	2.80

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	Post-test	3.51	3.27	2.92
Difference		0.81	0.91	0.12
Awareness	Pre-test	2.75	2.35	2.63
	Post-test	3.63	3.39	2.74
Difference		0.88	1.04	0.11
ICC	Pre-test	2.64	2.32	2.60
	Post-test	3.46	3.23	2.73
Difference		0.82	0.91	0.13

The comparison of the results of group one and group two revealed that although the members of group one, who are frequent participants, reported higher scores in the post-test (in the overall ICC and its four subcomponents), the growth difference in group two was bigger than that of group one. In other words, despite the fact that students in group one attained higher scores, it cannot be claimed that they achieved higher ICC. However, students in group two achieved a higher difference in ICC growth, and thus, it can be concluded that they achieved higher ICC. This type of results can be explained by returning back to the students' scores in the pre-test. That is to say, frequent participant students in group one scored better than students in group two in the pre-test. This does not mean that they are already interculturally competent but maybe they were more curious to know about others' cultures, the thing that made them motivated to participate and telecollaborate with others in the project.

The assumption that the students within group one were a bit more aware of cultural diversity and impact, and curious to discover it than students in group two at the beginning of the project is supported by the results of the awareness subcomponent. The

difference in the mean calculated for the pre-test and the post-test is 1.04 for group two which means that there is an increase in students' awareness. The first group's growth in the same subcomponent is a bit less; they achieved a 0.85 mean of difference.

The results gained for the subcomponent 'awareness' are almost the same for the other subcomponents except for knowledge. In other words, the difference between the pre-test and the post-test means, be it the evidence of growth, is noticed to be larger in group two than in group one. But for the knowledge subcomponent they marked the same difference although the first group's scores are higher in all the subcomponents.

Another important point that is observed when comparing the individual growth within the three groups is that all the students experienced a degree of ICC development in group one and two, although not all members had the same degree of growth. Besides, individual growth is much more evident within the members of group two. However, not all learners in group three experienced an ICC improvement; only three learners showed a growth that ranges from 0.3 to 0.98.

Shedding light on group three, it can be noticed that the ICC mean calculated for the pre-test was almost the same as the ICC mean calculated for group one, as it was better than the ICC mean calculated for group two. The same observation is true for the ICC subcomponents i.e. the results of group three in the pre-test are close to those of group one and better than those of group two in all the ICC subcomponents.

However, in the post-test the results of group three were the weakest in all the subcomponents together with the overall ICC. The difference counted for the growth was small and not significant for the four ICC subcomponents. This weak achievement is reflected in the overall ICC growth that equals 0.13 compared to 0.82 for group one, and 0.91 for group two.

A major difference that is noticed when comparing group three to group one, and to group two, is that the small growth reported by the whole group is not reflected in the individuals' ICC increase. In other terms, when considering individual enhancement in the three groups, it can be noticed that members of group one and two shared this improvement; all members experienced a particular degree of enhancement. For group three, however, the ICC growth is restricted to a number of students. Ten students did not report any enhancement, 25 students marked a very low difference in the ICC progress (less than 0.3), and only three students out of 38 scored between 0.4 and 0.98.

Henceforth, it can be concluded that the telecollaborative project designed within the confines of blended learning approach helped 'Master One' learners to achieve a enhancement in their ICC level compared with other students who relied on traditional classes. Although the participant students participated with different frequencies, they experienced ICC growth but also with different degrees.

5.7. Summary of the Results

The questionnaire used in the present study is developed by Fantini and Tirmizi (2006). It is used as a pre-test and a post-test, and it is analysed using the SPSS. After entering and cleaning data, the validity and reliability of the questionnaire were tested. Results related to validity revealed that the 'Factor Analysis' was appropriate with KMO= 0.873, and Bartlett's test of Sphericity= 0.000 which is a significant result. However, the determinant was less than 0.00001. For reliability, measured by Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient, the four subcomponents α was more than 0.60, and $\alpha = 0.95$ for the overall ICC reliability.

Comparing the results of the pre-test and the post-test reported by the group of students who participated in the online project, and within which the blended learning

approach imbedding Facebook was implemented, difference in performance was realised. There was an increase in the scores reported by the vast majority of the students. This increase was reflected in the mean counted for the overall ICC as well as for the four components. The difference in learners' performance was 0.74 for knowledge, 0.89 for attitudes, 0.82 for skills, 0.96 for awareness and 0.85 for the overall ICC

Dividing the students who participated in the telecollaborative project into two groups based on their participation (frequent or not) allowed the researcher to compare their results, from one hand, and to compare them with a third group, from the other. The results revealed that the second group outperformed the third group, while the first group outperformed both. However, the second group noticed a high individual growth.

Conclusion

This chapter has been devoted to the analysis of the quantitative data obtained from the use of a questionnaire as a pre-test and a post-test. The analysis done through the use of the SPSS is combined with a description of the results. The latter tackled first the results of the pre-test and the post-test gained by the students who took part in the project in general. Next, the participant students were divided into two groups based on their participation frequency, then they were compared with each other, on the one hand, and with a third group on the other. The third group was found to attain less ICC enhancement that is almost insignificant, however, group one and two reported an ICC enhancement but with different degrees; group one had higher scores and group two had more individual enhancement. This finding had to be investigated further to find out how non-frequent participants obtained these results. This was done through the use of focus groups. The next chapter will present the results of the focus groups and their analysis to further clarify the results of the questionnaire.

Chapter Six Presentation and Analysis of Focus Groups Results

Introduction

The focus group method was carried out at the end of the study. Learners were organized into different focus groups that contain from eight to ten members, on the basis of their participation in the online project, i.e. regular and frequent participants were called to constitute particular focus groups, while those who participated modestly or rarely were arranged together. However, two final focus groups were a mixture of both, in an attempt to stimulate further response and to create dispute to pave the way for further information to occur.

This chapter aims at presenting the results of these focus groups; starting with a description of the ideas/ points of view that emerged within the discussions, then moves to analyse these information in relation to the development of ICC, on the one hand considering the operational definition selected for the study, and in relation to the advantages and disadvantages that have been noticed within the use of Facebook in teaching, on the other hand.

6.1. Presentation of the Results

The total number of the focus groups was twelve, and the discussion was guided by a number of questions to draw the learners' attention to the points that they may forget, to get particular information that serve the aim of the study, and to avoid getting discussions out of subject/ interest. Henceforth, the presentation of the results will be guided too by these questions, instead of analysing the information that occurred within each focus group separately, to avoid the repetition of the same ideas.

6.1.1 Question One

How do you evaluate your online participation in terms of frequency and regularity? and why?

These first questions aimed to find out the reasons that pushed learners to participate or not. Answering these questions, learners gave answers that could be organized into two categories; the first group represents the reasons that justify their participation –mainly cited by frequent participants and those with medium participation-, and the second represents the reasons that justify the lack of participation.

The first reason behind learners' participation in the project was evaluation i.e. their participation was evaluated and they would be given a mark, the latter was needed in order to succeed. However, the vast majority of frequent participants agreed that even though the mark was important, it was not the only reason behind their participation. Gradually, other reasons appeared to share importance, and they could be summarized as follows:

- Learners liked the idea of using a Facebook group because it allows them to discuss many ideas, and to share different points of views, it creates curiosity to know about new topics, and mates' points of view in relation. They considered the group a platform where they can give their points of view related to the posted topics, express their opinions, and reflect on those of the others.
- Learners became closer to each other and knew each other more. Some learners felt excited interacting with their mates from other groups (Master one learners in other groups) and with the Brazilians; they liked the way they interact and make comments.
- Reading others' comments was motivating; learners compared themselves to others in terms of competence, knowledge and information then tried to comment to improve themselves.

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- The learners found the posted topics interesting and motivating.
- Shy students found it an opportunity to express themselves and their ideas; it helped them to decrease the level of anxiety and shyness and feel relaxed when discussing ideas. Expressing themselves online, convinced them that their level is not inferior compared to that of the others, and this was reflected on their participation in class. One shy/ introvert student explained that stating: "This experience changed me, I started to participate (in class) and I tried to do my best to share with others my point of view". Another explained: "I don't like to speak in front of public... I learnt a lot and I felt that I have the freedom to express myself".
- Learners benefited in terms of writing and getting new vocabulary from friends' comments. In class, they worked more on speaking, and the Facebook group helped them to work on writing. Reading others' comments revealed different ways of expressing the same idea, the latter was helpful to develop one's style of writing.
- The method was new and amazing; learners are no more using Facebook for just chatting, but they use it for learning through doing different tasks.
- Learners wanted to improve their language proficiency through interacting with others who have a better level.
- The method helped those who stopped studying for years, before they got the chance to finish their master studies, to refresh their memories and to get familiar with their classmates.
- The idea of using Facebook was enjoyable and funny; they enjoyed reading the different comments.
- It became a habit to get to the group and make comments whenever they use Facebook.
- It was interesting to exchange cultures (The Algerians and The Brazilians) including things and vocabularies that do not exist in the other. For example, Algerian learners used the

names of dishes and traditional clothes as they are used, and fellow Brazilians started asking about the meaning of these words, and vice versa.

- Facebook presented an easy way to learn; they can learn while lying in bed.
- The use of Facebook provided learners with a platform where they can practise English because outside class there are none, and inside class there is only one module within which they can speak English "*pratiques communicationnels*", but unfortunately, the time allocated for this module is only one hour and a half. The other modules are content modules; learners just listen to their teachers or present already prepared papers.

However, other reasons have been demonstrated to explain the participation inconsistency by some learners. These reasons are mentioned either by students who participate rarely or those who participate from time to time. However, it is worth mentioning that these students explained that even if they did not post or comment, they tended to read the comments of their mates together with topics' instructions and the cultural information imbedded.

The reasons that inhibited learners from participating regularly and frequently could be summarized as follows:

- Problems of net connection especially in the campus, some learners waited until they went home to post their comments. This fact made their interaction with others difficult; they did not respond or reply to others' comments. In this vein a student said: "I wrote about the topic on a paper waiting to have a net connection, then I found myself too late, I was shy to post it..."
- Illnesses was a reason that some students shared, some of them suffered from 'the Migraine' i.e. they cannot spend a lot of time in front of a screen, others had some problems with their eyes.

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- Some students suffer from a very high level of anxiety “Debilitative Anxiety”; they cannot talk or even write because they think their level is very low, and they are afraid to be seen or judged by others.
- Learners had different social problems that prevented them from participation. These problems included being married (for girls) and having a lot of house work to be done (cleaning, cooking...) together with family problems, some students were about to stop their studies, but they did not as they did not attend their classes.
- Working the whole day or travelling was another excuse that left neither time nor energy for learners to participate in the group.
- Some students lost their Facebook accounts many times, thus, they were not able to see the group's activities.
- Sometimes they did not post comments because they did not like the topic.
- Students who did not succeed in the first semester were busy preparing themselves for the resit exam that took time in March.
- Some students claimed that they had other studies and house work to do; they had not time.
- At the early beginning of the project, some learners received offensive replies from other mates, since then, they decided not to interact with them anymore; they just posted comments from time to time.
- Surprisingly, students' laziness was another reason behind the lack of participation; one student explained that this is a personal character.

“This is me, on Facebook, I never comment... I make a like or nothing...”

Another girl shared the same cause stating: “I read my friends' comments but I did not post... I'm lazy, sometimes I asked my sister to post on my behalf... but she did not accept...”

- Misunderstanding the teacher's words when she told the students who do not have a Facebook account that the Facebook participation will not be counted. The teacher did this to avoid being unfair with these students since their families prevented them from having a Facebook account; they have been told that their evaluation will be based on what they have in class only. Some students explained that when they heard that they will not be evaluated, they lost their motivation, and eventually either stopped participating or participated occasionally during the last weeks.
- One learner claimed that he could get all the cultural information in the group from elsewhere.

6.1.2. Question Two

What have you thought about using Facebook for educational purposes?

This question aims to find out learners' attitudes towards the method before they tried it, and whether these attitudes changed after this experience, or they formed a factor that influenced negatively their reaction towards the project.

In answering this question, learners divided again into two main groups; the first group members explained that they were sceptical and felt anxious about it, while the other group argued that they liked the idea and that they felt excited to try it.

Providing reasons of such response, the first group members argued that, as learners, they had different conditions i.e. not all of them will be able to participate. Others thought it will be a waste of time, and that it is a weird method that they had never experienced before. Other learners manifested that they dislike the idea because they did not have experience in using Facebook. Others thought it will be time consuming, and not useful or

worthy. Finally, some learners explained that they believed Facebook is not devised for education but for chatting with friends.

However, the other group of students clarified that they found the idea new and different; they liked it because they like to try new things. Some students responded as follows:

“I liked it, I thought the teacher is crazy, and she has special ways of teaching”

“The question that came to my mind is ‘Does miss have time to check all the comments?’”

Others felt surprised but happy because they like using Facebook, and this method will be a reason to justify their use. They further explained that their friends, families and other people in the surrounding environment were surprised and shocked when they told them that they study using Facebook.

After using the Facebook group within this project, the vast majority of learners agreed that they changed their attitudes towards the method because they found it useful.

One instance is a student who said:

“I asked myself: we have the class to learn, why we use Facebook, but when I used it, I found it very beneficial”

However, few students –mainly boys- argued that they still think that Facebook is not meant for education, other social media as Skype and Forums would be better. They did not change their attitude towards the method, and they were not participating regularly for this reason.

6.1.3. Question Three

Do you find the use of Facebook with class sessions an innovative motivating method?

The vast majority of learners agreed that the method was used for the first time and that it was motivating. They explained that although they did not like some topics (the learners mentioned different topics according to their preferences), the discussion motivated them to participate and to share their points of view with others. Some others argued that the source of motivation within the method were the topics themselves, "motivation comes from the topics themselves". With time learners became curious to know what will be the next topic, and how they will react, and what are the Brazilian's ideas and opinions. Examples of responses that support this claim are:

"I have really regretted not replying to all the comments at the beginning..., now I feel more motivated..., if you post something, I'll comment for sure..."

"It was motivating, and still it motivating even though there is no mark..."

Furthermore, they explained that the method is something new, and that it is motivating especially for this generation - the technology generation-, in opposite to traditional ones, they explained:

"The most important thing is that it motivated us and helped us in our learning"

"When I read my mates' comments, I realized a big difference in the level... I was motivated to participate to improve my level..."

Consequently their vivid participation and exchange of ideas moved to the classroom where, with time, they became more motivated to interact and speak.

6.1.4. Question Four

To what extent have you benefited from the experience?

In terms of cultural knowledge, learners claimed that they have got some cultural information from the fellow Brazilians, and from the knowledge found in the tasks, or the tasks themselves like the critical incidents. They illustrated:

“Even I did not participate frequently, I have read the comments... I have learned about the Brazilian culture”

“In terms of knowledge, information and culture, it is helpful...”

“We learned about the Brazilian culture, especially when they posted photos and pictures...”

Besides, the cultural knowledge was not found only in interacting with Brazilians; the tasks pushed students to look for information about other cultures. The extent to which they gained cultural knowledge varied from little to significant depending on the consistency of learners' participation and interest, i.e. frequent/ regular participants showed more benefits than the others. However, no one claimed that he/she did benefit nothing.

Besides, the vast majority of learners agreed that they became more aware of their own culture and how it differs from other cultures. They explained that this awareness is gained through comparing one's own culture to the others. Moreover, new aspects of their own culture were discovered through interaction with others from the same country and/or city. They became aware of the existence of subcultures; they stated that:

“Even we share the same culture, there are differences between us”

“I was surprised that in Jijel different regions have different cultures”

“We have noticed that we have multicultures within the same place...”

Learners agreed on the importance of learning about other cultures because of the differences that exist between them in terms of behaviour and the way of thinking, in order to avoid judging others, and to be aware of the way they think without imposing one's way of thinking.

In terms of attitudes, learners claimed that this experience pushed them to change their attitudes towards Brazilians or towards topics. They illustrated:

“I noticed that those Brazilians are very kind, my first attitude was not like that...”

“When I heard in media such things about Brazilians, I asked them... and they responded differently, and at the end I found that they are just stereotypes”

“When we discussed how Europeans and Americans see us ‘Muslims’... but this is only media, when we search for other videos we know that they are kind... so our attitude became different...”

“Sometimes we tended to change our minds about something that we believed in before... and ideas”.

Moreover, all students in all the focus groups agreed that they have learned not to judge people, to accept them and their ideas even if they are different, they have to respect them because everybody sees things from his own perspective; the latter cannot be recognized without knowing the other and putting oneself in the others' shoes.

“What I have learnt is that you should not judge people or hate them until you know them”

“I started to be more open to different opinions, opinions that I was not ok with in the past... and so I did in my real life... I am so grateful to this experience”

Furthermore, learners agreed that they have benefited a lot from this experience in terms of critical thinking. They started questioning what they took earlier for granted:

“We learned not to take things for granted, we should ask questions”

“I think at the beginning all people were judgmental and had certain prejudice... but once we talked... we started thinking critically, and when we want to convince someone, we do it the right way... also I think that culture imposes certain things that's why we had such judgments and these prejudice, that's why we are subjective, but once you get familiar with other cultures, it becomes easy to get less judgmental”

The aforementioned quotes reflect learners' common belief that they became more open minded, and they learned to accept others as they are, without trying to change them, or to impose personal perspectives and behaviours, in this sense a student claimed that

“When we communicate with native speakers,... we need to avoid presuppositions...”.

“Next time I meet someone (from other cultures), I'll not insist on my behaviour based on my culture...”

Another example that was given within the discussion was depicted by a student who wanted to illustrate the use of judgments and presuppositions through telling the story of a German who invited an Algerian for something. They agreed that an Algerian tends to respond saying ‘No’ waiting for the other person to insist (this is our culture), however, the German would never insist which would be considered as rudeness if the person is not aware of their culture; “this is their culture, they are serious and very severe, and ‘No’ means ‘No’”. In this case these learners interpreted behaviours of both Algerians and Germans and related them to different cultures.

Within the same stream of thought, other groups of learners referred to the use of non verbal communication as a source of misunderstanding if people are not aware that these gestures and facial expressions differ from one culture to the other, or within the same culture. They confessed that discussing this topic online helped them know a lot about non verbal communication used throughout the world.

In terms of skills of discovering and interaction, learners clarified that the topics pushed them to search and discover new information each time; the following statement is an example:

“...the topic of human rights pushed me to go to google and search and find a lot of information...”

When a new topic was introduced, learners who had background knowledge/ ideas that had relation shared them, however, those who did not have any knowledge waited for others to comment, then tried to generate an idea, or they opted for Google to search for information. Learners took the topics of discussion to their daily life to search for the truth, and discover more. Hence, the search for information was not only using Google, but also through asking more knowledgeable persons outside class.

Besides, reading others' comments created a sense of interaction i.e. learners felt that they wanted to interact through adding new information to what was previously mentioned, asking for clarification of some ideas, asking for evidence in case of disagreement, and agreeing with others and supporting one's opinion with arguments and evidence. In such interaction, it should be mentioned that motivating tasks/ topics encouraged students to interact, as can be deduced from the following quotes:

“It happened to me once... she commented ‘give arguments’... I felt very happy... she pushed me to search more about the topic and give arguments”

“A Brazilian asked me about the story of the ship... I didn’t know it, I was obliged to search for it to give her an answer...”

Regarding learners’ interaction with each other, this experience brought them closer, so that when they came to class, they felt at ease to talk and express themselves i.e. they wanted to interact with each other more. This idea can be easily inferred from the following:

“We study together but we do not get the chance to talk and share our points of view... it was great... interaction is needed, I didn’t know them, so it was a chance to know you...”

“I have known many types or kinds of people...”

Learners at the beginning of their interaction on Facebook group used to use offensive language when they disagreed with each other or with different points of view; they use expressions as:

‘No, you are wrong’

‘Come on, where are you living’

‘Are you serious...’

‘Who says this used only 1% of his brain...’

But later on, they learned that each person is free to have his/her own standpoint. Gradually, they shifted to use other expressions to push their friends consider other details that they neglected. These expressions include:

“I respect your point of view, but I believe...”

“I see your point, but what about...”

“I understand, but I disagree...”

In this vein, students further clarified:

“Personally I do not use these expressions, but deep down, I say... It's ok he/ she has his/her point of view, I'm going to accept...”

“I was once offensive using judgements with a boy, but later on I solved the problem and apologized...”

Another benefit that learners expressed within their discussions was decreasing shyness and increasing self-confidence. They claimed:

“I myself gained a lot of self-confidence because I was somehow away from studying... and my writing became rubbish... but when I read what others write, I felt that I am better than many students, and I can improve my writing”

“When we discuss topics on Facebook... and come to class, we have ideas to express, so...we feel more released to speak... ideas about topics and the ideas of friends”

“In this group of Facebook, I started writing, to structure the sentences, pay attention to punctuation, it is really working for me... just like you are gaining confidence in yourself, and you say it's ok, I'm progressing....”

“Before I was a shy person, but now I am not... before I did not talk to people unless I know them, but now I can...”

“At the beginning I did not have self-confidence...until the second semester, I got used...”

6.1.5. Question Five

To what extent have you benefited from the experience in terms of the four skills: writing, reading, listening and speaking?

Regarding the four skills; writing, reading listening and speaking, learners agreed that writing was the skill that took the lion's share. They stated that the method helped them develop their writing; their writing level became better regarding the fact that they did not have a written expression session the whole year. Explaining how the method helped them to be better writers, students pointed out different justifications; the latter could be organized as follows:

- It was helpful in terms of punctuation; they paid attention to what they had written because their teacher would read them, together with other Algerian/ Brazilian partners. They wanted their writing to be good to be able to convey their messages, and their ideas could be understood appropriately. This idea is evident in the following quote:
 "when I revised what I wrote, I realized that the idea is not clear...I need punctuation..."
- It gave them the chance and time to check the spelling of words.
- Reading the others' comments, learners learned new vocabulary and language structures.
- They developed the ability of self-correction; they learnt to correct their mistakes, they write, read again, compare to those of others, then edit as a way of providing feedback.
- They refreshed their memories, activated their background knowledge, and generated new ideas through reading others' comments.
- They agreed that the Facebook group pushed them to write in English in different authentic situations, instead of developing an essay about a selected topic which is the case in traditional classes.

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- They explained that in class, they did not have the opportunity to read and check what other mates wrote, but on the Facebook group, they see each others' writings, and also have the chance to correct their and others' mistakes. Clarifying more the latter, learners explained that peer correction took place in private inbox i.e. when learners noticed that their mates had made some mistakes, they sent them messages on their private inbox to show them the mistake and ask them to correct it.

“When I asked Amina for something, she said... go and correct your mistake first...”

- They had the chance to use dictionaries or Google translation i.e. they had time to look for the meaning of new vocabulary either that other mates had used or that they wanted to use.
- The feedback they received, or they made themselves, helped them remember the mistakes and avoid them in the future to write better;

“I personally had problems with the ‘s’ of the third person singular in the simple present, when I wrote I used ‘mean’, then I realized that it should be ‘means’, from that time I did not forget the ‘s’, it helped me in writing”

- The method helped learners to evaluate themselves, comparing their writing level to that of the others. Due to this evaluation, learners started searching for different solutions to help them work more on their writing.
- It encouraged learners to write formally and academically compared to their writing before i.e. they used to use informal language with friends including a lot of abbreviations, symbols and icons, this way of writing affected negatively their language competence regarding words spelling, and sentence structure, and it was reflected in their writing and speaking in class.
- It was helpful in terms of organizing ideas.

- Learners claimed that they could benefit from others' mistakes i.e. when they read others' comments, they used to pay attention to the mistakes, and then tried to avoid them in their own writing.

Concerning the reading skill, learners agreed that they found themselves reading the comments of other participants, besides reading online articles and online information found in different websites in an attempt to have knowledge about particular new topics, to gain some ideas that help them participate and interact with others. Furthermore, they claimed that sometimes when they started reading about a particular topic, they found themselves reading about other related topics naturally, and unconsciously without feeling bored of reading. They further explained that writing and reading are interrelated to each other and enhancing one leads to a progress in the other.

For the speaking skill, learners agreed that the experience online, did not help them develop this skill directly, since they did not have online oral chat with the Brazilians. However, they manifested that it helped them develop this skill indirectly; it helped them decrease their shyness, get familiar with mates, know others' levels and their ideas, develop one's own ideas and increase self-confidence. Learners' contributions in the focus groups discussions varied to point out this skill:

“At the beginning I was a shy person... by time... I benefited especially from the Facebook group, I started to express my points of view, I started to think critically, to share my opinions and to question things... so, coming to the class room, I started talking I asked myself why should I keep silent... I should talk...”

“At the beginning I hated speaking in class, but later on I loved it”

“It was amazing this year to have all students participate in class, not like the previous years...”

They further clarified that they acquired the new vocabulary they had learned from the Facebook group discussions, and used them in class, and with time they became more fluent. Moreover, writing and speaking are two interlinked skills, so that, the improvement in one skill affects positively the other.

Last but not least, the only way through which learners practised listening was through listening to the videos that presented some tasks in order to get the idea, and start discussion with others. However, some learners claimed that they did not even watch the videos because of problems in the net connection; they just read their mates' comments to understand what it was about, then started commenting. Hence, the latter agreed that they did not benefit regarding the listening skill.

To sum up, learners agreed that the course –be it a mixture of Facebook group discussions and inside class discussions- tapped at the four skills because what they did in the Facebook group was not isolated but related to the class. However, if the Facebook group is isolated from class (like the case of summer holidays), it would be helpful only for writing, reading, and listening in the case of using videos.

6.1.6. Question Six

What are the shortcomings that you have noticed?

The disadvantages to which learners referred can be listed in four main points:

- 1- The number of the Algerian learners overcame that of the Brazilians; this fact led to have a platform that contained much more Algerian cultural information compared to the Brazilian one.

- 2- Some of the Algerian learners were not interested in the project; they participated just for the marks, and this was reflected in their comments, they just added their comments and left the group with no attempts to interact with others or respond to their posts.
- 3- The lack of interaction with native speakers, especially face to face interaction or live oral interaction. This lack of interaction also characterized the relationship between the Algerian Master One students; they belong to four different groups. They explained that they did not talk to each other even at the university because they did not know each other, or as they claimed, some students believed they were better than others i.e. they had a high level of self-esteem. The interaction found was between those who had already known each other and with Brazilians. Interaction was also affected by gender i.e. girls sometimes refused to chat with boys, if this chat was taken into the private inbox, because of the cultural constraints. Moreover, they explained that interaction was related to the psychology of individuals i.e. some persons preferred not to talk to everybody. However, in class, interaction was more.
- 4- Very few students argued that the topics were formal; they suggested topics which are less formal.

6.1.7. Further Information

In addition to the information that served to answer the previously stated/mentioned questions, other related information occurred in the focus group discussions, and which should not be neglected. This information appeared in the form of suggestions or comments.

First, learners claimed that the idea of using Facebook for education would be very beneficial, but for those who took it seriously, not those who participated just for the mark or evaluation. Learning English, or languages in general, is a matter of motivation; if

learners are motivated to learn, they will find a way to learn and Facebook group is one of them.

Second, the learners shared their positive feelings towards the humanistic aspect that existed in the class; they felt that they were brothers and sisters, and the teacher was a friend and a guide. This fact helped them to overcome anxiety and develop their speaking skill and fluency. A student demonstrated this view saying

“We feel that we are protected in terms of the humanistic aspect...and we learned from each other”

Third, although the mark was a convincing motive behind their participation, frequent participants claimed that they liked the experience, and later on they participated to learn. They added that if other class mates got familiar with the Facebook group through participating regularly, they would have enjoyed it and liked it more. This was the case of some students who explained that they faced difficulty at the beginning, but with time they became familiar with it.

“I was so excited but at the beginning... I did not participate... I saw many comments at one minute...I felt that we are focusing only on that group...we have other studies... I was confused...”

Forth, the learners, generally, divided their time between studies and checking their Facebook accounts to chat with friends or share their states of mind, etc. However, students who participated in the project agreed that they divided the time they spend on Facebook, half for friends and half for education, they explained this behaviour stating:

“Sometimes, when you are online, you feel that you are throwing time out of door... but now actually I have a purpose in using Facebook”

“I could not divide my time, so I blocked many friends; they talk too much...to let me focus...”

“Before when we use Facebook, we forget our studies, but with this group we are connected... it is easy to study...”

Fifth, some learners suggested that the Facebook group could be used the same way with only Algerian students; they could use it to discuss different points of view and to develop language proficiency but with the teacher's supervision, they argued that other groups like 'Master One Group' exist, and that some teachers are members, but the activities they do are not helpful i.e. learners do not feel obliged to interact using English correctly, as there are no tasks to guide their discussions because of the absence of teacher's supervision.

Besides, the activity of the teachers is restricted to launching courses and lectures. Within this stream of thought, some learners, although they dislike being pushed to participate by including evaluation, they showed their awareness concerning the fact that evaluation is used as a strategy to make them participate, from one hand, and to make them participate in an appropriate way, from the other.

Sixth, some students argued that this project gave them an idea about the possible use of Facebook for education; consequently, they started joining other groups where the English language is used for communication, and where members from different countries could be found to enrich their cultural knowledge. Furthermore, the sessions of feedback were rated as very beneficial in terms of language and content; they learned how to adjust their ideas and behaviours together with the language.

6.2. Analysis of the Results

The results described in the previous section depict learners' responses to different questions. The latter were designed to be a bit general to avoid restricting learners' answers, and to avoid 'Yes' or 'No' answers that may be given as a result of what learners assume to be more appropriate. In other words, although the aim of the study is to investigate the extent to which learners developed their ICC, questions used in the focus groups were not direct; they did not point the different required behaviours directly. The aim of this question design is to prevent the formation of assumptions (what is appropriate or not) that may bias results.

This section seeks to analyse learners' answers and to relate them to the four components of ICC, and its subcomponents presented in the operational definition adopted by the study. Moreover, in the previous section, learners' responses were presented as a whole i.e. without pointing any variation related to their participation frequency and regularity. In this section, learners' frequency and regularity of participation is considered while describing the behaviour/ skills related to ICC development.

The first ICC component that is put under scrutiny is: attitudes. Abilities linked to this component are:

- 1- Value and respect cultural diversity;
- 2- Be open and curious to learn about people who have different cultural affiliations;
- 3- Question what is taken for granted a 'normal';
- 4- To tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty;
- 5- To seek out opportunities to engage and corporate with others with different affiliations;

Filtering learners' answers, it can be claimed that all learners, who participated in the focus groups -be they frequent, medium or rare participants-, agreed that they should accept the different others as they are, respect their ideas and opinions, their way of thinking, and style of life. They further warned against using one's cultural affiliations to judge people; individuals behave according to their cultures, they have the right to be different. They explained that we should not judge persons before we know them. In this sense, it can be concluded that the vast majority of learners developed the ability to value, respect and tolerate difference together with questioning what is taken for granted. However, curiosity to learn about the others and seeking opportunities to collaborate with them are abilities that were shown most by frequent participants. Henceforth, learners expressed a development in their attitudes but with a slight variation between frequent and medium/ rare participants.

Knowledge and understanding is the second ICC component. It includes the ability to:

- Recognize the internal diversity of all cultural groups;
- Understand and be aware of one's own and other's assumptions, perceptions, stereotypes, prejudices, and overt and covert discrimination;
- Understand the influence of one's and other's language and culture on life experience;
- Develop communicative awareness i.e. others may express the same idea similarly or differently depending on the conventions available in both their language and culture;
- Develop cultural knowledge related to others' beliefs, values, practices, discourses and products;
- Understand interaction processes be they cultural, societal or individual.

Generally speaking, the vast majority of learners agreed to gain a lot in terms of cultural knowledge; frequent participant through interaction and asking for information, and other learners through reading the comments on the Facebook group page. This cultural knowledge is linked to the Brazilian culture, to other cultures mentioned in various tasks, and the Algerian sub-cultures. Learners became more aware of the subcultures that exist within the Algerian culture, and how our behaviours and way of thinking is influenced by these cultural affiliations, this was evident in their speech. May be the most famous example that learners acknowledged was the girls' refusal to have a private chat with boys; they interacted on the Facebook group, in class, but not using private inbox, this behaviour was related to the Algerian conservative culture.

Moreover, learners shared the opinion that participants, while posting their comments, used different ways or styles of writing to express the same idea, the fact that helped them learn new vocabulary and styles of writing. This common response reflects a communicative awareness among the majority of learners who admired the way some learners used to express their ideas, and worked collaboratively with others to help them correct some mistakes through the use of peer feedback either in terms of language or content.

Last but not least, interaction etiquettes/ strategies took the lion's share within learners' discussions, some of them explained how they changed overtime their way of interaction including various expressions especially those used to disagree, others talked about avoiding to ask about things that may be offensive in some cultures like asking women for their age, or asking individuals of their religion. Here it is worth mentioning the contribution of a girl who said:

“(to be appropriate), I did not ask Brazilians ‘what is your religion?’, I asked them ‘what are the religions that exist in Brazil?’”.

Shedding light on the aspect of interaction within their discussions, it can be noticed that learners were annoyed at the beginning by the use of offensive language, and the use of strong expressions when disagreement took place, but with time learners became aware that the expressions they use affect their interaction with other individuals, as they should be careful discussing some topics or asking some questions that could be considered rude in some societies or cultures.

In sum, it can be assumed that learners -be they frequent participants or not- developed an acceptable level of cultural knowledge and understanding that allow them recognize internal cultural diversity, and how it shapes their behaviour and way of thinking, be they part of each particular culture, and those of others belonging to other cultures. This awareness pushed them to investigate the correctness of some stereotypes and prejudices that they face in daily life before they generate final judgements. It stretched to the way individuals express their ideas -that may be similar or different- in a unique manner using available language and cultural background. Such awareness was reflected in the way learners interacted with each other, respecting each other points of view, and trying to disagree in a respectful non-offensive manner.

Despite the fact that frequent participants together with learners with less frequent/ regular participation showed that they have benefited from the project regarding the acquisition of cultural knowledge and developing their sense of understanding, from one side, and developing positive attitudes –with a slight difference between them-, from the other; they differed with regard to the third component “skills”. The latter includes the ability to:

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- decentre from one's own perspective;
- discover information about the different others;
- interpret others' practices, belief and values and relate them to one's own;
- show empathy i.e. understanding others' thoughts, beliefs, values and feelings;
- be cognitively flexible, adapting one's way of thinking to situations;
- explain one's views and critically evaluate and judge one's and others' beliefs, values, practices, discourses and products;
- adapt one's behaviour to different cultural situations;
- develop linguistic and sociolinguistic skills;
- use plurilingualism skills to achieve intercomprehension;
- act as mediator.

Reviewing learners' responses, it can be noticed that all the focus groups talked about the benefit of developing one's own writing and speaking skills through acquiring/ learning new vocabulary, language structures together with interaction processes. Henceforth, it can be concluded that learners had benefited from the project in terms of developing the linguistic and the sociolinguistic skills. Apart from the latter, the other abilities were also discussed by learners when they claimed that they became aware that their behaviour is shaped by their culture, their comments/ quotes are evident illustration:

“Next time I meet someone... I'll not insist on my behaviour based on my culture”

“I think culture imposes certain things, that's why we had such judgements... but once you get familiar with other cultures, it becomes easy to get less judgemental...”

These two quotes are only two instances with which the learners strongly agreed. They represent evidence in favour of learners' development of the ability to decentre from one's own perspective, discover information about the different others, be cognitively flexible,

and adapt one's behaviour to different cultural situations. Referring to stories like the one of the German invitations and the use of non-verbal communication in different situations; how they are interpreted throughout various cultures, and how they may cause misunderstanding, provides arguments for the claim that states that learners developed their skills of interpreting and relating. The insistence on avoiding judgements, and trying to put oneself on the others' shoes -as learners said- were opinions that appeared within the discussions, together with the tendency to explain oneself without imposing one's point of view on others. However, acting as a mediator and using multilingualism are skills that learners did not speak about.

Comparing learners in regard to the extent to which they developed the component of skills, it has been noticed that the great portion of these abilities was mentioned within the discussions of the focus groups that included frequent/ regular participants, except for the ability to develop the linguistic and sociolinguistic skills, and to critically judge one's and others' behaviour. These were shared by learners in all the focus groups.

The fourth component, actions, embeds four main abilities:

- seek opportunities to engage with people who have different cultural affiliations;
- interact and communicate appropriately, effectively and respectfully with the different others;
- cooperate, share and discuss with others from different cultures different perspectives to build common ones;
- challenge attitudes and behaviours that encourage discrimination, and defend human rights regardless of human affiliations.

Learners who were frequent/ regular participants, in contrast to those with less frequent participation, talked about ways they use to seek opportunities to engage with other

different partners. These opportunities could be part of the Facebook group where learners call the Brazilians to answer some questions, to clarify some aspects, or to give their opinions regarding particular points, in addition to participation in other online groups that include people from different places and cultures. Besides, the same learners showed a satisfaction towards their interaction and communication with the Brazilians, although their number was small compared to that of Algerians, they considered them to be respectful and kind people.

Challenging attitudes and behaviours that encourage discrimination can be illustrated by the example given by focus group members when they referred to the attitudes they used to have, because of media, in relation to the hatred shown by the West towards Islam and Muslims. Learners explained that a critical evaluation of the case led them to change this attitude because they realised that media exaggerate, and not all Westerners hate or want to harm Muslims, instead Muslims sometimes do some behaviours and represent their culture in a bad way which results in prejudices and stereotypes. This example gives us a hint about learners' tendency to stand with the human rights regardless of cultural affiliations.

6.3. Summary of the Results

The present research aims at investigating the possibility of using social media, more particularly Facebook, in education to develop learners' ICC. Using focus groups as a tool of collecting qualitative data helped in the occurrence of various information that serve answering the research questions.

Regarding learners' level of ICC, it was found that learners succeeded to develop it but with certain variation from one learner to the other. In other words, learners who

participated regularly and frequently in the Facebook group showed more abilities than those with less participation.

This conclusion was drawn after an examination of the different abilities that constitute the main four component of ICC declared in the operational definition. The results showed that in terms of attitudes and cultural knowledge understanding, the vast majority of learners claimed to gain benefit and improvement, but with a slight difference in one ability; the latter refers to the ability to seek for opportunities to engage and cooperate with others with different affiliations related to the component of attitudes. However, the difference between the abilities developed by frequent participants and those who participated less was evident when the third and fourth components were addressed. Frequent participants showed more abilities and improvement in both. The interpretation of these results was shown by learners themselves; while frequent participants shared ideas, got into interaction with others, and exchanged information, less frequent participants read these comments and participated from time to time, a participation that is characterized mainly by the lack of interaction i.e. they posted their comments only without responding or replying to others. This kind of participation allowed them to gain cultural knowledge and understanding, and eventually develop their attitudes but not skills and actions, since these two require participation and cooperation with others.

Besides the development of ICC, other advantages of the method emerged. Learners found the method a new innovative method that is motivating, on the one hand, and enjoyable and easy to use, on the other. Shy learners or introverts found it a way to express and share their ideas, and a tool to gain self-confidence that paved their way towards more oral interaction in class. In addition, the method brought learners closer to each other and to the teacher which resulted in a class where learners feel that they belong

to the same family. Regarding that most people believe that Facebook pushed people to waste their time on nonsense matters, learners explained that the Facebook group used in the project helped them divide their time between chatting and doing educational tasks and practicing language, it kept them attached to their studies. Finally, learners argued that this group helped them to recognize how these new technologies could be used in an effective way to develop language proficiency instead of only chatting.

However, the shortcomings should not be discarded. The main points raised by learners can be linked to interaction on the Facebook group. First, the number of Brazilians was less than that of Algerians which made it difficult to have one to one interaction, or a balance between the comments posted by Algerians and those of the Brazilians. Second, the lack of interaction that characterized some Algerian learners was reflected in their way of participation; they did not attempt to discuss the topics with others, or to respond to their posts. These behaviours resulted in a lack of interaction between them and the other participants.

Conclusion

This chapter has been meant to provide a detailed description and presentation of the information that emerged within the focus group discussions, in a concise and precise manner to avoid the repetition of the same ideas, but with using some learners' quotes as illustrations. These responses were analysed in relation to the different abilities that constitute the four components of ICC, and which are demonstrated in the operational definition adopted for the study. The chapter ended with a summary of the results gained. The next chapter will devoted to the discussion of these results and the implications.

Chapter Seven: Discussions and Implications

Introduction

This chapter includes two sections. The first section seeks to discuss the results and to confront the finding to form a global vision and understanding. The latter is required in order to answer the research questions asked at the beginning of the study. The section ends with some limitations that were noticed during the study. The second section is devoted to the implications of the study and suggestions for further research.

Section One: Discussion of the Results

The previous three chapters: chapter five, six and seven, presented the results that the use of the three different research tools revealed, but separately. Therefore, the aim of the present section is to deal with the discussion of the obtained results and the limitations of the study

7.1.1. General Discussion

The observation of the participants revealed that they differ in their online participation, as they differ in their participation in class, both quantitatively and qualitatively. In other words, the frequency of their online participation, the type of the posted comments and the willingness to interact with others differed from one learner to another. However, putting the ICC abilities under scrutiny revealed that both frequent and non-frequent learners enhanced their ICC level, but with some individual variation. The latter was more noticed with regard to abilities like questioning what is taken for granted, decentring from one's own affiliations and the abilities related to the fourth component 'actions'.

The aforementioned results gained from the participants' observation were echoed and supported by the findings of the survey that was used as a pre-test and a post-test. Learners achieved enhancements in the four subcomponents of the ICC; knowledge, attitudes, skills and awareness. All these survey subcomponents are linked to the three first components of the ICC manifested in the operational definition. The individual variation showed up again in the survey's results, more particularly in the range scores; it was 2.96 in the pre-test with a minimum of 0.68 score and a maximum of 3.64 score, then it was 2.66 in the post-test with 0.91 and 4.57 for the minimum and the maximum respectively.

The results of the focus group discussions confirmed the results of the observation and the questionnaire. Both frequent and non-frequent participants have developed various abilities linked to the ICC components. However, the frequent participants showed more development especially in abilities related to the 'action' subcomponent. For cultural knowledge, the frequent participant learners seemed to have more cultural knowledge than the others, and the same was noticed for the skills subcomponent. In other words, although the majority of learners showed ICC abilities, the frequent participants were able to explain more and gave convincing examples. For the ability to act as a mediator and using multilingualism, learners did not talk about them in the focus group discussions, but their posted comments and reflections in class observed throughout the course revealed that some of them –be they frequent or non-frequent participants- developed this ability. The abilities related to the subcomponent 'actions' were mentioned by the frequent participants. The latter means that the frequent participation allowed learners to develop the majority of ICC abilities, while the non-frequent participants acquired knowledge, attitudes, awareness and some skills.

Furthermore, the comparison that took place between the frequent participants, the non-frequent participants, and another group of 'Master One' who did not participate in the project revealed that in the post-test learners within the first two groups outperformed those in the last group in regard to the overall ICC level, and its four subcomponents: knowledge, attitudes, skills and awareness, although in the pre-test the results of the learners in the third group were close to those of the frequent participants.

The members of the third group signalled an ICC development of 0.13 which is a small one compared to 0.91 development achieved by non-frequent participants and 0.82 achieved by frequent participants. Nevertheless, not all learners witnessed improvements; four students scored worst in the post-test, six of them did not mark any difference, 25 learners reached a very small difference that did not overcome 0.3, and only three learners achieved a difference which ranges between 0.4 and 0.98. This small improvement could be attributed to the inclusion of 'Culture and Language' and 'Interculturality' as modules that learners should cover within the 'Master One' level. This explanation is further supported by the learners' scores; the highest score attained by the learners of the third group was that of the subcomponent 'knowledge'. Presenting cultural knowledge in a lecture would allow learners to acquire cultural knowledge, but little would be achieved in terms of attitudes, awareness, skills and actions. Moreover, the development that the three learners achieved (≥ 0.3) could be attributed to personal efforts, or a wide social life experience, especially with the presence of students whose age is more than 40 years old.

Despite the fact that learners/participants at the University of Jijel have the same modules as those in Mila, the comparison showed that the former attained better scores than the latter especially in relation to attitudes, skills and awareness. These findings support the claim that participants, be they frequent or non-frequent, have benefited from

their contact with other English users who belong to a different culture, a contact that was facilitated by Facebook. The questions that imposed themselves after these findings are 'why non-frequent participants did not participate frequently like their mates?' And 'how could they achieve significant ICC development? The third research tool 'the focus group' was devoted to collect further data and information that would explain ambiguous results.

The main reasons that were given to justify the non-frequent and the irregular participation of some learners are the problem of the net connection, and the existence of similar points of view. The lack of the net connection prevented some learners from posting and responding on the appropriate time, when they had connection, they felt that it was too late to say what they wanted to say. Besides, the big number of Algerian learners resulted in the repetition of similar ideas or opinions; when learners read their mates' comments they found that their ideas were already mentioned, and they preferred not to repeat what was already discussed. Moreover, during the last three weeks a misunderstanding occurred among some learners; they heard the teacher talking to the learners who did not have Facebook accounts (the four learners) telling them that they would be evaluated only for the class discussions, hence, they thought that the online participation would not be evaluated and they stopped regular participation. Furthermore, illness, social occupations and personal character were reasons that few learners referred to in order to explain their non-frequent participation. In this respect, it can be claimed that the lack of participation shown by some learners was not because they did not like the method, but due to different conditions and problems. However, the lack of interest and motivation were other reasons that appeared to exist but in a limited scope with a few number of students.

However, even though non-frequent participants did not post, interact and comment regularly, they argued that they were used to read their mates' comments, compare their views and learn from their discussions. In other words, these learners did not completely ignore the online activity, instead they were there reading the instruction and the cultural knowledge provided within it, following the discussions that took place between Brazilians and their classmates, and some of them used to read all the mates' comments then posted one comment that functions as a conclusion. Most of the time the writers of such comments acted as mediators who tried to link others' views and solve conflicts. Besides, the in class reflections on the online activity were helpful for these learners since they had the chance to evaluate together with the teacher their participations and those of the others in terms of both content and language. The class feedback was not the only feedback that learners had; they explained in the focus group discussions that they were used to help each other using private chat to draw the attention of their friends to the errors they committed and possible corrections. Thus, they aided each other in writing, interacting and communicating.

Therefore, it can be claimed that medium participants were present in the discussions; they just did not show up. The nature of the Facebook group provided them with the opportunity to benefit from the knowledge presented either by the teachers or by other participants whenever they had the net connection and time. This characteristic distinguishes the present telecollaborative project from the traditional classes. In other words, all learners have the opportunity to equally participate, they could find authentic situations where the English language could be used and practised, they could all see what their mates write, and they could help each other providing feedback when necessary. In the traditional classes, learners may not have equal opportunities to participate because of shyness or large size classes, authentic situations are difficult to be realised, and in writing

only the teacher could read the learners' writings and provide feedback. However, this illustration does not argue for replacing the traditional classes with telecollaborative projects, but it supports the use of a blended learning approach that makes use of both face to face and online interactions..

Asking learners about their Facebook usage revealed that before they tried this method of teaching, they were using Facebook mainly for chat and fun. But at the end of the project, its use for education increased in the group of participants but not in the group of non participants. During the focus group discussions, learners explained that the 'Cross Cultural Thinkers' group opened their minds on other ways to use Facebook, rather than chat; they have increased its use in order to learn English, for example, they joined other groups of learning English and blocked friends who tended to chat a lot. Henceforth, it can be claimed that the use of telecollaborative teaching directed learners towards more beneficial and effective use of Facebook, and raised their awareness about how it could be used in a positive manner.

Concerning the attitudes towards the use of Facebook for educational purposes, some learners were sceptical and did not like the idea at the beginning, but later the majority of them changed their attitudes because they found that it was beneficial. For the other learners who liked the idea at the early beginning, they were active participants and accepted to participate even if their participation would not be evaluated. That is to say, learners liked the integration of Facebook social experience; they were not against it although some of them showed sceptical feelings at the beginning. This result contrasted those reported by Ophus and Abbit (2009), and Irwin et.al. (2012) who revealed that learners refused the use of Facebook in education. Therefore, it can be claimed that the social context has a major role and influence on the success or failure of a particular method

or teaching tool. In other words, Asian learners, for example are claimed to refuse the use of Facebook in education (Hagley, 2016, personal communication), but Algerian learners in the present study welcomed its use.

Having positive attitudes towards the method affected learners' motivation to participate. Those learners who had positive attitudes were motivated to participate, while those who had negative attitudes which they changed later, gained motivation with time and increased their participation, some of them regretted not participating at the beginning. However, those learners who had strong negative attitudes towards study, learning English or Facebook were characterised by rare participation and modest enhancement. Thus, based on these results, it can be concluded that at the end of the project, the majority of the learners perceived the method as new, motivating and helpful. These results concurred with results reported from other researches, mainly those of McBride (2009) and Peterović et.al. (2012); they argued that the use of Facebook for educational purposes raised learners' motivation to learn. Despite that, it should be stated that very strong negative attitudes are difficult to be changed. Hence, besides the negative attitudes towards the telecollaborative partners (O'Dowd, 2015), negative attitudes towards the use of the tool of communication affects negatively the telecollaborative projects.

In addition, the focus group results clarified that learners were aware of the development they achieved in terms of speaking and writing. They used their mates' comments to learn new vocabulary and style of writing, and then compare oneself to others to point out weaknesses and work on them. For some introvert/ shy learners, comparing oneself with others gave them confidence. Usually extrovert learners take the lion's share of talking in class, and this gives the impression that they are better in language proficiency. However, having a platform where all learners could participate equally, and

read the comments of each other gave introvert learners the opportunity to compare themselves with the extrovert learners and to come to the conclusion that they are not bad, thus, they gained self-confidence and decided to participate more. On the other side, reading the comments of the shy learners, extrovert learners realised that their shy friends have interesting ideas and styles of writing from which they would like to share and learn. Consequently, they gave them more opportunities to talk in class asking them for their opinions.

The findings of the present study revealed that some learners stopped participating regularly as soon as they have heard that their online contribution will not be assessed. After some learners had heard the teacher informing the four students who did not have Facebook that their evaluation would not take into consideration the online participation, they thought it was the case for all learners and informed their classmates. That is to say, although the teacher did not plan to stop the evaluation of the learners' online participation, spread rumours led to the emergence of such a variable accidentally. Consequently, some learners stopped participating during the last weeks while others kept participating. The latter explained in the focus group discussions that they liked the project, they benefited from it, and they felt it was a part of their everyday use of Facebook, therefore, they did not care for the evaluation and the mark. To this end, it can be concluded that the participation of the learners in this kind of projects is affected by the individual characteristics including motivation and interest. In other words, if learners are motivated and interested in learning, in general, and learning English, in particular, the evaluation issue could be used at the beginning only to make them familiar with the interaction, and then they would themselves select to participate. However, if learners lack motivation, they would stop participating as soon as the evaluation is eliminated.

Hence, to guarantee learners' participation in the telecollaborative projects, evaluation should be twined with the online activity. This is further illustrated by the findings of the pilot study; the Brazilian EFL learners' participation was rare when the activity was not part of the course, and participation was voluntary, but participation increased when the online activity became part of the course and it was evaluated. This result confirmed the claims of researchers like O'Dowd (2013; 2015).

Observing learners participating in class, including the shy ones, could be a sign of a good atmosphere that helped them overcome their shyness. They became, with time, active in class. This finding was confirmed by learners in the focus group discussions. They claimed that they gained more self-confidence due to many factors. First, they felt worthy after participating in the online discussions; they read their mates' comments, they learned from them either in terms of content or language, and they compared themselves and their level to that of their classmates. Eventually, they developed self-esteem together with the ability to discuss topics orally in class. Developing abilities of respect and accepting the different others, learners felt comfortable to express their ideas; they have learned that they should not attack those who are different or have different points of view. Being aware that no one would attack or criticise their ideas, learners chose to participate more in class discussions and disputes.

Last but not least, having the teacher as a friend on Facebook helped them reduce their anxiety; they are used to discuss with her their educational problems and they became closer to each other. This result went hand in hand with the claims of Peterović et.al. (2012); they argued that teachers could use Facebook to establish and foster good relationships with students and to assess them formatively.

7.1.2. Answering Research Inquiries

The present study was guided by a number of questions; they are organised as follows:

- What are the attitudes of 'Master One' students towards the use of Facebook for educational purposes?
- Does the integration of the Facebook experience in education raise learners' awareness related to its use?
- Does the experience help learners use Facebook more effectively?
- Does the telecollaborative project designed for the present study help learners develop their level of intercultural communicative competence?
- Does such Facebook integration facilitate the teaching process and make it more motivating and effective?
- What are the main benefits and shortcomings that may show up in the Algerian context?

'Master One' students who participated in the telecollaborative project divided at the beginning into two groups; the first group showed feelings of scepticism towards the use of Facebook for education mainly because of the net connection problems i.e. they would not have equal chances to participate, and the negative attitudes they had already formed against Facebook. The second group was excited; learners liked the idea and were motivated and curious to try it. At the end of the project, the majority of learners showed positive attitudes towards the use of the 'Facebook group'. They liked the method and they argued that it helped them in learning. However, a few number of learners argued for the use of other tools like Forums and Skype. Thus, they were not against telecollaboration, but their negative attitudes towards Facebook or personal preferences, e.g. Boys prefer oral live chat than written chat, were behind complains about the use of Facebook.

'The Cross Cultural critical Thinkers' was a Facebook group that helped 'Master One' learners raise their awareness about the Facebook use; activities, time spent, and the information they encounter while using it. In class reflections, learners from time to time, showed their disagreement with what they found as posts/ publications on Facebook pages. They eventually argued that when they find information, they should think of it before taking it for granted. Besides, some learners clarified that Facebook chat used to take most of their time, but with the participation in the project, they reduced chatting with friends to be able to increase learning opportunities either in the 'Cross Cultural Thinkers' group or others that serve similar aim. Developing awareness towards the use of Facebook resulted in a more effective use. In other words, learners developed their capacity of questioning information when it occurs before believing it, they recognised the type of activities that caused time wasting which raised their chances to organise and control their Facebook use.

Developing ICC, be it the focus of the study, was reported by the findings of the three research tools used in the present study. Although learners did not participate with the same regularity and frequency, being a part of the project allowed the vast majority of learners to benefit from the group's activity. They succeeded to develop their ICC level compared to their own level at the beginning of the project, and to the level of those who did not participate. However, some individual variation occurred among learners, mainly in abilities related to the subcomponent 'actions'. The variation in learners' ICC level goes hand in hand with research in the field; researchers (see section 2.1.4) explained that the process of being intercultural is unique for each individual.

The teaching atmosphere, after the integration of Facebook, was not confusing as some learners anticipated. The relation between the teacher and the learners became better, and the interaction between learners improved as they improved their skills of interaction.

As a result, learners could learn a lot despite the fact that they had only one session per week that is devoted for developing communication skills.

The last research question was directly asked in the focus group discussions. Learners explained that the teaching method used was enjoyable, innovative, motivating and easy to use. They have benefited in terms of ICC development together with other language skills, mainly writing and speaking, as they gained more self-confidence and self-esteem, especially shy students. Besides, learning how to direct the use of technology towards a more useful one, and to have a good relationship with the teacher and the classmates are other benefits that learners mentioned. However, the shortcomings that occurred in the discussions were related to the students' practices, like taking information as it is from other sources, the absence of native speakers in the interaction, and the big number of Algerian students involved in the online discussions.

On the light of the answers provided for the research questions, it can be claimed that the hypothesis of the present study is confirmed and the aim of the study was fulfilled. In other words, the present study hypothesised that if Facebook experience is integrated and shared in foreign language classrooms, learners would better benefit from it in developing their intercultural communicative competence. In this respect, learners who were part of the project were able to achieve an ICC enhancement. This claim was further supported by the findings of the comparative study; learners who did not participate in the project achieved very little ICC improvements.

7.1.3. Limitations and Extraneous Variables

As any research in the field of language teaching and learning, and especially those which deal with complex concepts like the ICC, the present study faced some limitations.

These are mainly related to the questionnaire, the control group participants and finding the telecollaborative partner.

First, the complexity of the ICC concept prevented the researcher from developing a questionnaire particularly for this study; one with tested validity and reliability. Instead, to search for a survey that is previously validated and widely used by researchers in the field, and that goes hand in hand with the operational definition seemed more appropriate. Studying a group of these tools (see appendix 'B'), Fantini and Tirmizi (2006) has been selected.

Second, having an experimental design for the study with an experimental and control group was not an easy choice. Recent research argued against the use of the control group because it is difficult to find out individuals with unique characteristics, besides the difficulty to control all the extraneous variables that may affect the validity and reliability of results (LeBaron, 2013). Looking for a group that have the same characteristics as the experimental group in terms of age, level, and the teaching content and procedure (*canvas*) resulted in the 'master one' learners at the university center of Mila, but their number was only 34; it was not close or equivalent to that of the experimental group. Other 'master one' learners, from other universities, who have the same characteristics could not be found. Therefore, it was decided to use this group in a comparative study, and to deal with percentages rather than numbers to avoid any bias.

Third, finding native speaker partners could not be achieved, although there were many attempts to telecollaborate with teachers and classes interested in such kind of projects. The researcher used different web sites and platforms (google (+), www.uni-collaboration.eu and IATEFL) to call for partners, but unfortunately, there were no responses from Great Britain. From the USA, there were responses from 'Valeria

Belmonti' and others (Modern Languages Media Center/ Department of World Languages and Literatures). The main reasons behind the failure of the telecollaboration were their engagement in other previously planned telecollaborative projects, or because of a disagreement in the tool used; they mainly prefer videoconferencing or forums, but the Algerian participants refused to use them because of the lack of use/ computer literacy or because of cultural backgrounds. The latter was posited mainly by girls who form the vast majority of participants. Disagreement with the tool used showed up with other partners like Japanese who perceive Facebook as a private tool that should not be used in education.

Fourth, the researcher planned to use two recent approaches of telecollaboration in parallel (guided by teachers which is the case of the Brazilian group, and independent which is the case of the group from Exeter University). This selection aimed, first, at paving the way for variant cultural experiences to occur in the discussions. Including Algerian learners who are studying abroad is one way that would help in developing learners ICC through sharing and discussing their experiences with their peers at home (O'Dowd, 2016a). Second, this twining method would help to consider the issue of transferability in planning the project. That is to say, learners do not interact with other learners from only one culture but with learners living in different cultures, besides dealing with some tasks that present information about other different cultures in the world. Therefore, they are supposed to develop ICC towards various cultures not just one.

However, the moderate participation of the Algerian learners at the Exeter University, caused by the homework they have to accomplish in a short time, resulted in a lack of cultural exchange. Therefore, to enlarge the cultural diversity within the group discussions, some of the designed tasks provided cultural information and described situations in other cultures to pave the way for descriptions of participants' own cultures,

and other comparisons to take place. In other words, to avoid exposing learners to one culture, the tasks are carefully designed to provide diverse cultural knowledge to help learners understand other different behaviours and compare them with theirs.

Fifth, the use of online live telecollaboration was not done because of variation in time in Algeria and Brazil; the difference of five hours prevented the organization of class sessions where live oral discussions could take place. To reflect on this drawback, learners were asked initiate oral discussions with each other, and some tasks required recording one's view related to a particular task instead of using writing.

Sixth, the survey (AIC) used to assess learners' ICC and the operational definition were based on Byram's definition (1997). However, the recent restatement of the abilities and the subskills that constitute ICC resulted in dividing them into knowledge, attitudes, skills and actions, instead of knowledge, attitudes, skills and awareness. Therefore, the subcomponent 'action' is not included as a subpart in the AIC. Consequently, the present research opted for the use of the participant observation and the focus groups since actions cannot be tested through a survey; they should be practiced by learners and seen by others.

Last, research in the field of telecollaboration recommended for projects that last for two months, at least, to be effective. Accordingly, the present research was designed to cover a period of time that exceeded three months. However, results showed that both frequent and non-frequent participants achieved progress because the latter were used to read the online group discussions and to benefit from them together with the class reflections. In this respect, the survey results showed that frequent participants scored better in the pre-test and the post-test, and non-frequent participants scored better in the difference attained. Consequently, it cannot be decided whether non-frequent participants

needed more time to develop certain basic abilities to move to developing 'actions', or they needed frequent participation.

Section Two: Suggestions and Implications

As any study that deals with individuals' behaviours, definite and precise conclusions are far from being attained. Therefore, directed by the results found in the present study, further suggestions and implications are noted for researchers and teachers working in the field of language learning and teaching, in general, and the field of telecollaboration, in particular.

7.2.1. Suggestions for Further Studies

This first part of suggestions is directed to researchers working in the field of language learning and teaching, trying hard to find out the best ways to help learners.

7.2.1.1. Possible Design

In the present study the survey used to test learners' ICC is the one developed by Fantini and Tirmizi (2006) because of issues of reliability and validity besides its relation to the operational definition selected. However, the use of other ICC surveys may reveal other findings. Therefore, studies that make use of other different tools of ICC assessment are recommended.

The present study selected 'Master One' learners at the university of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yhia / Jijel as participants, and with whom the results of the project were positive. Other studies are recommended to further consolidate the findings of the present research. They would be carried out with other 'Master One' learners at other universities to test their readiness for this type of projects, and the extent to which they would benefit from it in terms of ICC development.

Other telecollaborative projects would be designed making use of a variety of tools, rather than Facebook. However, it is recommended to find out about the needs and preferences of particular groups of learners when deciding about the tool of communication to be used. If learners do not prefer the use of the tool or do not know how to use it, they would not be motivated to participate. Then comparisons with the findings of the present research are possible.

In this regard, the selection of another communication tool like Forums, Blogs, Skype, E-mails, and Videoconferencing...would facilitate finding out the partners who welcome the use of such tool. The selection of Facebook in the present study was based on the learners' preference, but it created difficulty in finding the partner since it is perceived as something personal, that could not be shared with teachers or used for education, in some cultures.

7.2.1.2. Longitudinal Studies

The findings of the present study revealed that non-frequent participants showed developments related to particular abilities but not others. But further research is needed to find out whether the reason behind that is their lack of participation, or because they needed more time of practice. That is to say, they took time to develop abilities related to knowledge, attitudes and some skills, but they needed more time to work on other skills and actions. Although the present project spread over more than three months, may be this period was not sufficient for these learners. This assumption is supported by the findings of the survey used in the present research; frequent participants scored better than the others in the pre-test, which means that they had already some abilities on which they based and developed other skills. However, less frequent participants achieved a higher level of development but they needed to work more on developing other abilities. Henceforth,

further longitudinal studies are required to provide long periods of interaction in order to find out the impact of time and participation.

7.2.1.3. Testing Transferability

In the present study, the issue of transferability was not sufficiently addressed, although the researcher worked hard to gain the approval of various cultural groups of EFL learners to participate in the project. Moreover, there was an attempt to involve Algerian learners who travelled abroad to accomplish their PhD studies, but their participation in the online discussions were moderate because they had plenty of studies and research to be done. Consequently, the group of EFL learners who participated in the project and proved to develop their ICC would be a fertile case of study to test the transferability of the abilities gained. In other words, further research is needed to find out whether these learners' cultural knowledge, attitudes, skills and actions would be used when communicating with all other cultural groups, and then the use of the cultural tasks to guide discussions would succeed in addressing the issue of transferability, or ICC abilities were developed just towards the Brazilian partners.

Furthermore, other researches may be designed to link a particular group of EFL learners with various EFL learners belonging to different cultures, then compare them with a group of EFL learners who telecollaborated with only one cultural group of partners. That is to say, to design an experimental study to compare these two groups; the one that telecollaborate with various cultural groups and the one that telecollaborate with only one cultural group. The aims of such design may differ. First, the aim would be to find out the extent to which EFL learners would benefit from the telecollaborative projects i.e. which type would be more useful, easy to be designed, and more beneficial. Second, the research

would aim at testing the transferability issue i.e. which group of learners would be able to transfer the acquired ICC skills and abilities to other everyday life situations.

Although finding various cultural groups of EFL learners may be a difficult task since this field of research is in its infancy, it would be possible in the coming few years because of the fast development of technology and the internet related inventories.

7.2.1.4. Local Telecollaboration

The present telecollaborative project was carried out with a Brazilian partner, however, during the online discussion, it was noticed that learners learned a lot about their own culture, from one hand, and about the subcultures of their classmates, from the other hand. Henceforth, telecollaborative projects would be beneficial if they are designed to link Algerian EFL classes in various universities situated in different regions.

Connecting EFL learners at different Algerian universities would help them learn about the different subcultures that exist in their country, as it would help them develop the different abilities, skills and attitudes related to ICC towards the different communities that constitute the Algerian nation. Developing those skills would result in reducing misunderstandings and possible conflicts between the members of the same nation.

Moreover, the university teachers/ researchers in the Arab world would use this kind of technology to telecollaborate with each other. This would help them share knowledge, develop themselves as teachers and researchers, as it would help their learners understand the different cultures that exist within the confines of the Arab world to preserve its unity.

7.2.1.5. Testing Telacollaboration Approaches

Although the field of telecollaboration is still in its infancy, attempts to solve the problems that occurred resulted in the emergence of different telecollaborative approaches. The current study opted for the use of guided telecollaboration; the learners' interactions and activities were guided by the teachers. Other research may be carried out following other telecollaborative approaches such as the independent/ free telecollaboration.

Moreover, more sophisticated researches would carry out different telecollaborations, in parallel or successively, following different approaches in order to compare their results and efficacy related to developing ICC or other competencies. The aim of these studies could be finding out whether the selection of the approach affects the results and achievements of the learners. However, it could be finding out whether the selection of the approach is affected by the participants' cultural affiliations or not. In other words, do participants belonging to different cultures prefer particular telecollaborative approach than others? Answering this question would facilitate finding partners by designing telecollaborative projects that suit the participants' preferences.

7.2.1.6. Finding about the Communication Tool

In their reflection on the present project, some learners seemed to prefer other internet tools that could be used for education. Henceforth, we suggest conducting research that would attempt at finding out the most favourable tools that the Algerian university students would select. This kind of research should take its population from different universities to find out whether Algerian university learners have the same preferences, or their choices differ from one region to another.

Moreover, the results of the present research showed that boys, from one hand, preferred videoconferencing, live chat or videogames as tools that are motivational and which they would select to learn the English language. Girls, from the other hand, preferred Facebook and Instagram. Because the major concern of the present research is not to focus on gender differences in the telecollaborative projects, and the composition of the population is not suitable for generating conclusions; the vast majority of learners were girls, other researches would focus on this enquiry to find out the extent to which gender differences within classes would affect the design of telecollaborative projects and the tool used.

7.2.2. The Use of Facebook in Education

In the present study, the only Facebook feature used was the 'group feature'. It was used as a tool to link distant EFL learners, and allow them exchange information, ideas and views within their cultures. However, the use of Facebook for educational purposes is not restricted to telecollaboration.

The use of the Facebook experience for educational purposes or in educational settings would vary and can be used in different manners. Having the aim of raising learners' awareness about the Facebook use, teachers would use Facebook data as instances to stimulate discussions and reflections in class. Nowadays people frequently show their scepticism towards the continuously grown use of Facebook especially by teenagers. Besides, the posts and information found on the Facebook walls are not always correct, but unfortunately, most of Facebook users do not approach it with a critical mind. One main type of knowledge that Facebook users acquire, consciously or unconsciously, is the cultural knowledge. If people are not careful and critical in dealing with such kind of information, it would lead to cultural conflicts, stereotypes and prejudices. Henceforth,

education should not aim at just providing information to learners, but it should be interested in solving problems intelligently to prepare learners to be good citizens. Through taking some Facebook posts to class, and submitting them for discussion and reflection, learners would develop their awareness and critical thinking, as they would deal carefully with other posts that they may encounter in their daily life.

Launching lectures or courses using Facebook is a practice that some teachers do. However, the use of Facebook in this manner brings nothing new to the teaching/learning process; lectures could be distributed using unlimited tools. The aim of integrating the learners' social experience in teaching is not to replace the teacher, but the presence of the teacher is more important. Nowadays learners do not need information; they could find any information they look for in few minutes. They need direction, they need to learn how to analyse surrounding information correctly, and to think critically.

7.2.3. Developing the Writing Skill

The design of the present project could be used by teachers but with other aims; rather than developing ICC. That is to say, although the present study focused on developing the ICC, developing the writing skill could be another aim. The use of Facebook groups provides a platform where learners together with the teachers could write about different subjects, the matter that gives them opportunities to practice language, to benefit from others' vocabulary and styles, and to create a sense of competition among learners. Usually when students write in class, only their teachers can read their productions and correct their mistakes, but online all other participants and the teacher read the writings which urge them to consider, revise, correct and edit their contributions when necessary.

Moreover, the chat language that teenagers use these days is characterized by the overuse of abbreviations and symbols. The latter spread to be found in the learners' academic papers, and even in exam copies. In this situation, learners either use abbreviations and symbols unconsciously because they got familiar with them, or they do not know how to spell the words, and use the abbreviations and symbols assuming that the teacher could understand them. Therefore, the use of Facebook groups, through which teachers recommend learners to write academically, would help them practice academic writing while being engaged in one of their daily habits, chatting with friends. As a result, learners would develop new habits of writing full words rather than abbreviations, and learn how to spell words. This behaviour would affect positively their academic performance and achievement.

7.2.4. The Role of the Teacher

In the present study, the teacher did not only design the online tasks in collaboration with the Brazilian teacher, but she read all the comments for evaluation purposes. Besides, all 'Master One' students were given the chance to participate which resulted in 122 learners commenting in the Facebook group. In this respect, learners explained that the big number of Algerian students lead to the repetition of the same ideas.

Therefore, teachers would feel hesitant towards the method since they would conceive it as time consuming. However, detailed evaluation of a considerable number of learners was followed because of research requirements. Teachers would better use this method with a limited number of learners; reducing the number of learners to one class, for example, would help them handle it with less effort. In addition, they could avoid very detailed evaluation of the online activity, although including evaluation is of major importance to guarantee learners' participation.

In case the online discussions are followed by class tasks that demand reflection, learners would feel the need to read the online information and to interact with others in order to be able to give different points of view and arguments. Moreover, reading learners' comments would, by time, make teachers familiar with their names and their participation, especially if these teachers are already Facebook users.

Despite the fact that the findings of the present research encourage teachers to try telecollaboration with their students to achieve different teaching/ learning aims, the use of Facebook is one choice that could be changed, if needed, and replaced by other tools. Besides, if teachers fail to find telecollaborative partners who are native speakers, they could telecollaborate with other colleagues in other universities.

Moreover, this new method that includes the use of social experience-Facebook- could be used to establish a warm relationship between teachers and students. Sometimes students feel shy to talk about their problems and to discuss them with their teachers, but Facebook chat would help them overcome their shyness, and would enable teachers to know more about their students, and their problems to provide appropriate advice and help. Furthermore, it could help teachers shift to the role of a guide and facilitator that the modern teaching methods recommend, instead of sticking to the role of a controller.

However, teachers should be trained not only in the use of ICTs, or including Internet in classes, but they should be trained in designing and implementing telecollaborative projects. In this respect, it should be stated that although public universities may not provide sophisticated material like computers and Internet, but it cannot neglect that the new generation are familiar with those technologies. In other words, personal computers, smart phones, together with Internet 3G and 4G could be used for educational purposes.

Conclusion

The use of a triangulation of three different research tools in the present study allowed for the collection of qualitative and quantitative data to provide a more rounded understanding of the subject under study. The discussion of the results presented in this section served to link the findings and to answer the research questions. The use of Facebook as the tool of communication in the present telecollaborative project that aimed at developing learners ICC lead to the emergence of other variables which were not included in the study, and thus, they were not sufficiently addressed. Therefore, the present chapter has pointed out the limitations that were recognised, then, implications and suggestions for further studies and for teachers were provided. The suggestions mainly depicted possible designs of future telecollaborations, possible effective use of Facebook in education, and the guidelines for teachers' practice.

General Conclusion

The present study has aimed at the integration of the learners' social experience, the use of Facebook, to develop their ICC. The integration took place within a telecollaborative project that was designed in collaboration with the Brazilian teacher, Stephan Hughes. The teachers/ researchers designed weekly tasks to be posted in the Facebook group 'Cross Cultural Critical Thinkers', which was created for this purpose. Algerian 'Master One' learners at the university of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia/ Jijel and the Brazilian EFL learners were required to interact with each other to accomplish the tasks. The interaction took place during the academic year 2016/2017 and spread over a period that exceeded three months. The study was guided by the hypothesis that stated that if social media (Facebook) experience were integrated and shared in foreign language classrooms, learners would better benefit from it in developing their intercultural competence.

To collect data that helped in answering the research questions and served to confirm or refute the hypothesis, a triangulation of three different research tools was followed. The first tool used was the ICC survey developed by Fantini and Tirmizi (2006); it was used as a pre-test and a post-test to collect direct quantitative data. The second research tool was the participant observation; it took into consideration learners' participations both in class and online using learners' portfolios and a detailed observation grid. The focus group discussion was the third research tool that sought to gain more qualitative data to support the results.

The findings revealed that the integration of Facebook, as the tool of communication, in the telecollaborative project, and twinning it with class sessions had a positive impact on the learners' ICC development. First year Master students who

participated in the project achieved enhancement in the various abilities that constitute ICC, although they showed some individual variation in the participation frequency and in the abilities developed. In this respect, the finding of the three research tools echoed and supported each other. The efficiency of the method of teaching used was further supported by the findings of the comparative study. Learners who participated in the project outperformed those who did not participate, despite the fact that they had the same curriculum and syllabuses.

However, some variables that were not included in the study emerged, and consequently, some limitations were noticed. The latter can be summarized in the absence of native speaker partners in the telecollaboration and other partners from other culture to deal with the issue of transferability, the use of an already prepared questionnaire (AIC) instead of developing one due to the complexity of the concept, the lack of live oral chat caused by time difference, and the big number of Algerian students that caused the repetition of the same information. To overcome these limitations some suggestions and implications were provided to be followed by researchers or by teachers.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Definitions and Models of ICC.

Appendix B: Existing Assessments of ICC.

Appendix C: The Original Survey

Appendix D: The Survey used in the Current Study.

Appendix E: The Observation Grid.

Appendix F: The Tasks.

Appendix A: Definitions and Models of ICC

(Source: Griffith et.al., 2016, pp. 03-05)

Source(s)	Construct(s)/dimensions	Description	Model type
Bennett (1986)	Intercultural sensitivity	"the way people construe cultural difference and ... the varying kinds of experience that accompany these constructions" (Bennett, 1993, p. 24) Development of intercultural sensitivity through six stages: denial, defense/reversal, minimization, acceptance, adaptation, and integration.	Developmental
Gallois et al. (1988)	Intercultural communicative accommodation: situational factors, individual factors, and encoding/decoding factors	Interacting individuals adjust their communication styles to match the other individual's style. Competence is judged both within and between groups.	Adaptational
J. W. Berry et al. (1989)	Acculturation: integration, assimilation, separation/segregation, marginalization	Views toward adapting to a foreign culture and retaining one's cultural identity can be both orthogonal and dichotomous.	Adaptational
Imahori and Lanigan (1989) ^b	Intercultural competence: intercultural/communication effectiveness, relational validation, satisfaction, intimacy, commitment, stability, and uncertainty reduction.	Relationship subsfactors index, competent intercultural interaction between a sojourner and a host-national	Casual
Y. Y. Kim (2000) ^a	Host communication competence	One's adaptive capacity to suspend/modify old cultural ways, learn/accommodate to new cultural ways, and creatively manage dynamics of cultural difference/unfamiliarity and accompanying stress	Adaptational
Paige (1993) and Paige and Goode (2009) ^a	Intercultural learning: self as a cultural being, elements of culture, culture-specific learning, culture-general learning, learning about learning	Ability to effectively function in an intercultural situation abroad over time	Co-orientational
Gudykunst et al. (1994) and Pusch (1994) ^a	Global competence: mindfulness, cognitive flexibility, tolerance for ambiguity, behavioral flexibility, cross-cultural empathy	Motivation, knowledge, and skills make up global competence	Co-orientational
Lambert (1994) ^{a,b}	Global competence	World knowledge, foreign language proficiency, cultural empathy, approval of foreign people and cultures, ability to practice one's profession in an international setting	Compositional
Fantini (1995) ^b and Fantini, Arias-Galicia, and Guay (2001)	Intercultural communicative competence	"1) The ability to develop and maintain relationships, 2) the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with minimal loss or distortion, and 3) the ability to attain compliance and obtain cooperation with others" (Fantini et al., 2001, p. 27)	Co-orientational
Chen and Starosta (1996) ^{a,b}	Intercultural communication competence: intercultural sensitivity (affective process), intercultural awareness (cognitive process), and verbal/nonverbal skills (Fantini et al., 2001). May include motivation dimension (Yamaguchi and Wiseman, 2001).	Ability to effectively and appropriately execute communication behaviors in a culturally diverse environment	Compositional

Source(s)	Construct(s)/dimensions	Description	Model type
Byram (1997) ^{a,b}	Communicative competence (CC)	"Knowledge of others; knowledge of self; skills to interpret and relate; skills to discover and/or to interact; valuing others' values, beliefs, and behaviors; and relativizing one's self. Linguistic competence plays a key role." (Byram, 1997, p. 34)	Co-orientational
Fennes and Hapgood (1997) ^a	Intercultural learning	The expandability, flexibility, and adaptability of one's frame of reference/filter	Compositional
Howard-Hamilton, Richardson, and Shuford (1998)	ICC: knowledge, attitudes, and skills	Competence components consist of knowledge, attitudes, and skills across three levels: awareness, understanding, and appreciation of another culture.	Compositional
Hammer et al. (1998) ^b	ICC: interpersonal/intergroup salencies, communication message exchange, host contact conditions, attributional confidence, anxiety reduction, satisfaction	Satisfying intercultural interactions are mediated by conditions, strategies, and salencies that lead to greater attribution confidence and reduction of uncertainty (anxiety).	Casual
Ting-Toomey and Kurogi (1998)	ICC: knowledge, mindfulness, interaction skills, and facework competence criteria	Cognitive and behavioral abilities are predicted to increase the likelihood of positive (appropriate, effective, mutually satisfying, and mutually adaptive) intercultural interactions	Compositional
Ting-Toomey (1999)	ICC: personal, interpersonal, and system-level outcomes	The ability to manage changes in the self and the environment brought about by individual, interpersonal, and systemic influences during intercultural encounters	Casual
D. A. Griffith and Harvey (2000)	Intercultural communication competence: cultural understanding, cultural interaction, communication interaction, relationship quality	A component in a network of intercultural constructs that collectively can be judged by the criterion of relationship quality; cultural understanding and intercultural communication competence directly predict relationship quality.	Casual
Koester and Olebe (1989) [*]	Intercultural communication effectiveness: display of respect, orientation to knowledge, empathy, interaction management, task role behavior, relational role behavior, tolerance for ambiguity, and interaction posture	Behaviors that a nonexpert, nonnative English speaker can reliably assess as effective or not in a cross-cultural setting	Compositional
Lustig and Koester (2003) ^a	ICC	Not comprised of individual traits or characteristics but rather the characteristic of the association between individuals. Dependent on the relationships and situations within which the interaction occurs. No prescriptive set of characteristics guarantees competence in all intercultural situations: "social judgment that people make about others." (Lustig & Koester, 2003, pp. 64 – 65).	Co-orientational
Deardorff (2004, 2006) ¹	ICC: requisite attitudes, knowledge and comprehension, skills, desired internal outcomes, desired external outcomes	"the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (Deardorff, 2004, p. 194).	Compositional/Causal Path

Source(s)	Construct(s)/dimensions	Description	Model type
P. M. King and Baxter Magolda (2005)	Intercultural maturity: cognitive, intrapersonal, interpersonal components across three levels (initial, intermediate, and mature development)	Through ongoing study, observation, and interaction with individuals from another culture, one can develop greater intercultural awareness and sensitivity.	Developmental
Navas et al. (2005)	Relative adaptation: real and ideal attitudes held and strategies implemented by immigrant and native groups across situations	Extent of competence depends on the alignment between the strategies actually used by one group and the preferences of the other group.	Adaptational
W. D. Hunter et al. (2006)	Global competencies model: (inner box) recognition of others/differences, openness to new experiences and diversity, nonjudgmental stance; (middle box) understanding of world history and globalization; (outer box) identification of cultural difference to compete globally, effective participation (socially and in business) across cultures, collaboration across cultures, and ability to assess intercultural performance	"a person should attempt to understand his or her own cultural box before stepping into someone else's" (p. 279).	Compositional
Rathje (2007)	ICC	"transformation of intercultural interaction into culture itself" (p. 263); the coproduction of culture, not just the reflection of common cultural identities	Co-orientational
Arasaratnam (2008)	Intercultural communication competence: cultural empathy, experience, interaction involvement (conversation awareness), global attitude, and motivation	Intercultural communication competence is a direct function of cultural empathy. Motivation for competent communication is influenced by experience, interaction involvement, and one's global attitude, as well as prior experience with intercultural communication.	Casual
Kupka (2008)	ICC: basic human needs, culture A/B concepts and perceptas, noise	"impression management that allows members of different cultural systems to be aware of their cultural identity and cultural differences, and to interact effectively and appropriately with each other in diverse contexts by agreeing on the meaning of diverse symbol systems with the result of mutually satisfying relationships" (p. 16)	Co-orientational

Appendix B: Existing Assessments of ICC.

(Source: Griffith et.al., 2016, pp. 08-11)

Test	Developed (year)	Format	Delivery	Forms and items	Themes/topics
Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI)	Kelley and Meyers (1995)	Self-report; 5-point Likert scale (<i>definitely not true to definitely true</i>)	Paper and pencil/Online survey	50 items (4 subscales; 7–18 items per scale)	Emotional resilience, flexibility/openness, perceptual acuity and personal autonomy
The Global Perspective Survey	Hanvey (1982)	Self-report; 5-point Likert scale (<i>strongly agree to strongly disagree</i>)	Online survey	9 items	Process of cross-cultural relativism in which one is able to view his/her own culture in relation to other cultures while suspending judgment and ethnocentrism
Assessment of Intercultural Competence (AIC)	Fantini and Tirmizi (2006)	Self-report; 6-point Likert scale (<i>not at all competent to extremely high competence</i>)	Online survey	54 items (4 subscales; 11–19 items per scale)	Includes four dimensions: knowledge, attitudes, skills, and critical awareness.
Intercultural Adjustment Potential Scale (ICAPS)	Matsumoto et al. (2001)	Self-report; 7-point Likert scale; anchors unknown	Online survey	55 items	Measures cross-cultural competence through four psychological skills: emotional regulation, openness, flexibility, and critical thinking.
Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS)	Ang et al. (2007)	Self-report; 7-point Likert scale (<i>strongly disagree to strongly agree</i>)	Online survey	20 items	Measures cultural intelligence through four subscales: cognitive (knowledge of other cultures), metacognitive (awareness of how one thinks about other cultures), behavioral (behaving appropriately in cross-cultural interactions), and motivational (desire to interact with and learn more about other cultures).
Global Competencies Inventory (GCI)	Bird et al. (2002)	Unknown	Online survey	159 items	Measures leadership competencies of corporate managers and global leaders in areas critical to interacting and working effectively with people from different cultures.
Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)	Hammer (2011) and Hammer et al. (2003)	Self-report (with 10 additional demographic items); 5-point Likert scale (<i>disagree to agree</i>)	Online and paper and pencil	50 items	Measures orientations to cultural differences through five dimensions: denial/defense, reversal, minimization, acceptance/adaptation, and encapsulated marginality.
Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS)	Chen and Starosta (2000)	Self-report; 5-point Likert scale (<i>strongly disagree to strongly agree</i>)	Online survey	24 items	Measures intercultural sensitivity through five factors: interaction engagement, respect of cultural differences, interaction confidence, interaction enjoyment, and interaction attentiveness.
Scale of Ethnocultural Empathy (SEE)	Wang et al. (2003)	Self-report; 6-point Likert scale (<i>strongly disagree that it describes me to strongly agree that it describes me</i>)	Online survey	31 items	Measures empathy toward people of racial and ethnic backgrounds different from one's own. Contains four subscales: empathic feeling and expression, empathic perspective taking, acceptance of cultural differences, and empathic awareness.

Test	Developed (year)	Format	Delivery	Forms and items	Themes/topics
Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (MPQ)	Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000)	Self-report; 5-point Likert scale (<i>not at all applicable</i> to <i>totally applicable</i>)	Online survey	78 items	Measures multicultural effectiveness through five subscales: cultural empathy, open-mindedness, emotional stability, flexibility and social initiative.
Beliefs, Events, and Values Inventory (BEVI)	Shealy (2004)	Self-report and biographical data	Online survey	?	Measures openness to transformational experiences such as international educational experiences through 10 process scales, such as negative life events and need for control.
Cultural Orientations Indicator (COI)	Schmitz, Tarter, and Sine (2012)	Self-report; response scale unknown	Online survey	?	Assesses cultural preferences across three dimensions: interaction style, thinking style, and sense of self. Provides the test taker with comparisons of their own scores to country norms as well as recommendations for further learning and growth.
Culture in the Workplace Questionnaire	Hofstede (2010)	Self-report	Online survey	60 items	Based on Hofstede's five cultural dimensions: individualism, power distance, certainty, achievement, and time orientation. Designed to serve as a cultural values-based self-awareness tool.
Global Awareness Profile	Corbitt (1998)	Performance measure (knowledge test)	Online survey	126 items	Includes two dimensions: geography and context. Subcategories of context include environment, politics, geography, religion, socioeconomic, and culture.
Global Perspectives Inventory (GPI)	Global Perspectives Institute (GPI)	Self-report; 5 – point Likert scale; <i>strongly agree</i> to <i>strongly disagree</i>	Online survey	3 forms (general student, new student, study abroad posttest); 35 items; 6 subscales with 4 – 7 items per scale	Measures how college students relates to others from backgrounds different from their own and how they perceive their own cultural heritage. Measured through three dimensions and six global perspective scales: cognitive (with knowing and knowledge scales), intrapersonal (with identity and affect scales), and interpersonal (with social responsibility and social interactions scales).
Intercultural Competency Scale (ICS)	Elmer (1987)	Self-report; response scale unknown	Online survey	45 items	Measures intercultural effectiveness through 12 factors, such as approachable, intercultural receptivity, positive orientation, forthrightness, social openness, enterprize, shows respect, flexibility, perseverance, cultural perspectivism, venturesome, and social confidence.

Test	Developed (year)	Format	Delivery	Forms and items	Themes/topics
Tests for Hidden Bias	Project Implicit https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html	Performance measure (implicit association tests)	Online survey	14 different tests	Implicit association tests that measure unconscious biases such as negative prejudices toward various ethnic groups
Miville-Guzman Universality – Diversity Scale (M – GUDS)	Fuertes (2000)	Self-report; 6-point Likert Scale; <i>strongly disagree</i> to <i>strongly agree</i>	Online Survey	45 questions in the long form; 15 questions in the short form	Measures universal – diverse orientation (UDO), or the degree to which a person accepts diversity among people, through three subscales: diversity of contact, relativism appreciation, and comfort with difference. Measures worldmindedness.
Cross-Cultural World-Mindedness Scale (CCWM)	Der-Karabetian (1992)	Self-report; response scale unknown	?	?	
Multicultural Awareness – Knowledge Skills Survey (MAKSS)	D'Andrea, Daniels, and Heck (1991)	Self-report; 4-point Likert scale; <i>strongly disagree</i> to <i>strongly agree</i>	Paper and pencil	60 items	Designed for multicultural counseling; measures an individual's multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills.
Behavioral Assessment Scale for Intercultural Effectiveness (BASIC)	Koester and O'Lebe (1989)	Peer rating; 4-point rating scale	Paper and pencil	9 items	Measures intercultural communication effectiveness through peer ratings.
Global Team Process Questionnaire (GTPQ)	Bing (2001)	Self-report; Likert items as well as narrative questions	Paper and pencil	?	Measures effectiveness in global teams by examining skills, attitudes, and processes.
Inventory of Cross-Cultural Sensitivity (ICCS)	Cushner (1986)	Self-report; 7-point Likert scale; <i>strongly disagree</i> to <i>strongly agree</i>	Paper and pen/online survey	32 items (5 subscales, 5 – 10 items per subscale)	Measures cultural integration, behavioral response, intellectual integration, attitudes toward others, and empathy.
Implicit Association Test	Bazgan and Norel (2013)	Performance measure (implicit association tests)	Online test	?	Implicit measure of ICC with categories of national or minority language. Categorized stimuli were represented by the names of multiethnic localities from Romania, presented in the national language, Romanian; and minority languages: Hungarian, German, Turkish, Greek, and Slavonic.
Global Competence Aptitude Assessment	W. D. Hunter et al. (2006)	Performance measure (multiple-choice)	Online test	?	Measures internal readiness (self-awareness, willingness to take risks, open-mindedness, and perceptiveness/respectfulness of diversity) and external readiness (global awareness, world history knowledge, intercultural competence, and effectiveness across cultures).
Cross-Cultural Sensitivity Scale (CCSS)	Pruegger and Rogers (1993)	Self-report; 6-point Likert scale; <i>strongly disagree</i> to <i>strongly agree</i>	Paper and pencil	24 items total (two equivalent forms with 12 items each)	Measures the valuation and tolerance of different cultures.

Test	Developed (year)	Format	Delivery	Forms and items	Themes/topics
Intercultural Communication Competence (ICC)	Arasaratnam and Doerfel (2005) and Arasaratnam (2009)	Self-report: 7-point Likert scale; <i>strongly disagree</i> to <i>strongly agree</i>	Paper and pencil	10 items; 3–4 items for each dimension	Cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of intercultural communication competence
Intercultural Sensitivity Inventory (ICSI)	Bhawuk and Brislin (1992)	Self-report: 7-point Likert scale; <i>very strongly disagree</i> to <i>very strongly agree</i>	Paper and pencil	46 items; 14–16 items per subscale; individualism versus collectivism are asked in relation to own or other culture	Measures individualism versus collectivism and flexibility/open-mindedness.
Global Competencies Inventory	Kozai Group; Bird et al. (2002) Stevens, Bird, Mendenhall, and Oddou (2014)	Self-report: 5-point Likert scale; <i>strongly disagree</i> to <i>strongly agree</i>	Online test	160 items; 16 subscales with items ranging from 6–14	Competencies can be loosely grouped into perception, relationship, and self-management.
Cross-Cultural Social Intelligence	Ascalon et al. (2008)	SJT: 4 response options	?	14 scenarios; replies vary across ethnocentric – nonethnocentric and empathetic – nonempathetic	Measures knowledge, skills, and other characteristics that promote successful social interaction in cross-cultural interactions.
Cultural Intelligence Assessment	Thomas et al. (2015)	Self-report (multiple response scales) and verbal protocol trace	?	24 items plus verbal trace protocol	Measures cultural knowledge, knowledge complexity, cultural metacognition (self-report and trace), relational skills, perceptual acuity, empathy, adaptability, and tolerance for uncertainty.
Nonverbal Communication Competence Scale (NVCCS)	Kupka and Everett (2008)	Self-report; anchors unknown	Paper and pencil	5 items	Measures the degree of knowledge that is essential to recognize nonverbal behaviors of foreign culture members, the skills to show nonverbal behaviors, and the motivation to interpret and present them. Additionally, appropriateness and effectiveness in nonverbal communication is evaluated.

Appendix C : The Original Survey

(Source: Fantinin&Tirmizi, 2006, feil appendix g, pp. 18-21)

1. I could cite a definition of culture and describe its components and complexities 0 1 2 3 4 5
2. I knew the essential norms and taboos of the host culture (e.g., greetings, dress, behaviours, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5
3. I could contrast important aspects of the host language and culture with my own 0 1 2 3 4 5
4. I recognized signs of culture stress and some strategies for overcoming it 0 1 2 3 4 5
5. I knew some techniques to aid my learning of the host language and culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
6. I could contrast my own behaviours with those of my hosts in important areas (e.g., social interactions, basic routines, time orientation, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5
7. I could cite important historical and socio-political factors that shape my own culture and the host culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
8. I could describe a model of cross-cultural adjustment stages 0 1 2 3 4 5
9. I could cite various learning processes and strategies for learning about and adjusting to the host culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
10. I could describe interactional behaviours common among **Ecuadorians** in social and professional areas (e.g., family roles, team work, problem solving, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5
11. I could discuss and contrast various behavioural patterns in my own culture with those in **Ecuador** 0 1 2 3 4 5

Attitude

- While in Ecuador, I demonstrated willingness to
12. interact with host culture members (I didn't avoid

- them or primarily seek out my compatriots) 0 1 2 3 4 5
13. learn from my hosts, their language, and their culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
14. try to communicate in Spanish and behave in
“appropriate” ways, as judged by my hosts 0 1 2 3 4 5
15. deal with my emotions and frustrations with the host
culture (in addition to the pleasures it offered) 0 1 2 3 4 5
16. take on various roles appropriate to different
situations (e.g., in the family, as a volunteer, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5
17. show interest in new cultural aspects (e.g., to
understand the values, history, traditions, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5
18. try to understand differences in the behaviours,
values, attitudes, and styles of host members 0 1 2 3 4 5
19. adapt my behaviour to communicate appropriately in
Ecuador (e.g., in non-verbal and other behavioural
areas, as needed for different situations 0 1 2 3 4 5
20. reflect on the impact and consequences of my
decisions and choices on my hosts 0 1 2 3 4 5
21. deal with different ways of perceiving, expressing,
interacting, and behaving 0 1 2 3 4 5
22. interact in alternative ways, even when quite different
From those to which I was accustomed and preferred 0 1 2 3 4 5
23. deal with the ethical implications of my choices (in
terms of decisions, consequences, results, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5
24. suspend judgment and appreciate the complexities
of communicating and interacting interculturally 0 1 2 3 4 5
- Skills**
25. I demonstrated flexibility when interacting with
persons from the host culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
26. I adjusted my behaviour, dress, etc., as appropriate,

- To avoid offending my hosts 0 1 2 3 4 5
27. I was able to contrast the host culture with my own 0 1 2 3 4 5
28. I used strategies for learning the host language and about the host culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
29. I demonstrated a capacity to interact appropriately in a variety of different social situations in the host culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
30. I used appropriate strategies for adapting to the host culture and reducing stress 0 1 2 3 4 5
31. I used models, strategies, and techniques that aided My learning of the host language and culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
32. I monitored my behaviour and its impact on my learning, my growth, and especially on my hosts 0 1 2 3 4 5
33. I used culture-specific information to improve my style and professional interaction with my hosts 0 1 2 3 4 5
34. I helped to resolve cross-cultural conflicts and misunderstandings when they arose 0 1 2 3 4 5
35. I employed appropriate strategies for adapting to My own culture after returning home 0 1 2 3 4 5

Awareness

- While in Ecuador, I realized the importance of
36. differences and similarities across my own and the host language and culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
37. my negative reactions to these differences (e.g., fear, ridicule, disgust, superiority, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5
38. how varied situations in the host culture required modifying my interactions with others 0 1 2 3 4 5
39. how host culture members viewed me and why 0 1 2 3 4 5
40. myself as a "culturally conditioned" person with personal habits and preferences 0 1 2 3 4 5

41. responses by host culture members to my own social identity(e.g., race, class, gender, age, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5
42. diversity in the host culture (such as differences in race, class, gender, age, ability, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5
43. dangers of generalizing individual behaviours as representative of the whole culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
44. my choices and their consequences (which made Me either more, or less, acceptable to my hosts) 0 1 2 3 4 5
45. my personal values that affected my approach to ethical dilemmas and their resolution 0 1 2 3 4 5
46. my hosts' reactions to me that reflected their cultural values 0 1 2 3 4 5
47. how my values and ethics were reflected in specific situations 0 1 2 3 4 5
48. varying cultural styles and language use, and their effect in social and working situations 0 1 2 3 4 5
49. my own level of intercultural development 0 1 2 3 4 5
50. the level of intercultural development of those I worked with (other program participants, hosts, co-workers, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5
51. factors that helped or hindered my intercultural development and ways to overcome them 0 1 2 3 4 5
52. how I perceived myself as communicator, facilitator, mediator, in an intercultural situation 0 1 2 3 4 5
53. how others perceived me as communicator, facilitator, mediator, in an intercultural situation 0 1 2 3 4 5
54. Is there anything else you would like to

Appendix D: The Survey Used in the Current Study

Name:.....

Age:.....

I used Facebook for:.....years

The purpose(s):.....

Check the number below (from 0 = Not at all to 5 = Extremely well) that best describes your situation:

1. I could cite a definition of culture and describe its components and complexities 0 1 2 3 4 5
2. I knew the essential norms and taboos of the other culture(s) (e.g., greetings, dress, behaviours, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5
3. I could contrast important aspects of the target language and culture with my own 0 1 2 3 4 5
4. I recognized signs of culture stress and some strategies for overcoming it 0 1 2 3 4 5
5. I knew some techniques to aid my learning of the target language and culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
6. I could contrast my own behaviours with those of my partners in important areas (e.g., social interactions, basic routines, time orientation, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5
7. I could cite important historical and socio-political factors that shape my culture and the target culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
8. I could describe a model of cross-cultural adjustment stages 0 1 2 3 4 5
9. I could cite various learning processes and strategies for learning about and adjusting to other cultures 0 1 2 3 4 5
10. I could describe interactional behaviours common among Brazilians in social and professional areas

(e.g., family roles, team work, problem solving, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5

11. I could discuss and contrast various behavioural patterns in my culture with those in Brazil 0 1 2 3 4 5

Attitude

I demonstrate willingness to

12. interact with other culture members 0 1 2 3 4 5

13. learn from my interactants their culture 0 1 2 3 4 5

14. try to communicate in English and behave in “appropriate” ways, as judged by my partners 0 1 2 3 4 5

15. deal with my emotions and frustrations with the other culture (in addition to the pleasures it offered) 0 1 2 3 4 5

16. take on various roles appropriate to different situations (e.g., in the family, as a volunteer, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5

17. show interest in new cultural aspects (e.g., to understand the values, history, traditions, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5

18. try to understand differences in the behaviours, values, attitudes, and styles of others 0 1 2 3 4 5

19. adapt my behaviour to communicate appropriately as needed for different situations 0 1 2 3 4 5

20. reflect on the impact and consequences of my decisions and choices on my partners 0 1 2 3 4 5

21. deal with different ways of perceiving, expressing, interacting, and behaving 0 1 2 3 4 5

22. interact in alternative ways, even when quite different from those to which I was accustomed and preferred 0 1 2 3 4 5

23. deal with the ethical implications of my choices (in terms of decisions, consequences, results, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5

24. suspend judgment and appreciate the complexities of communicating and interacting interculturally 0 1 2 3 4 5

Skills

25. I demonstrated flexibility when interacting with persons from other cultures 0 1 2 3 4 5
26. I adjusted my behaviour as appropriate, to avoid offending others 0 1 2 3 4 5
27. I am able to contrast the host culture with my own 0 1 2 3 4 5
28. I use strategies for learning the English and about the other culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
29. I demonstrate a capacity to interact appropriately in a variety of different social situations in the target culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
30. I use appropriate strategies for adapting to the other culture and reducing stress 0 1 2 3 4 5
31. I use models, strategies, and techniques that aided my learning of the host language and culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
32. I monitor my behaviour and its impact on my learning, my growth, and especially on partners 0 1 2 3 4 5
33. I use culture-specific information to improve my style and professional interaction with others 0 1 2 3 4 5
34. I help to resolve cross-cultural conflicts and misunderstandings when they arose 0 1 2 3 4 5
35. I employ appropriate strategies for adapting when interacting with people from my culture 0 1 2 3 4 5

Awareness

I realize the importance of

36. differences and similarities across my own and the other culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
37. my negative reactions to these differences (e.g., fear, ridicule, disgust, superiority, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5
38. how varied situations in the host culture required

- modifying my interactions with others 0 1 2 3 4 5
39. how other culture members viewed me and why 0 1 2 3 4 5
40. myself as a "culturally conditioned" person with personal habits and preferences 0 1 2 3 4 5
41. responses by other culture members to my own social identity(e.g., race, class, gender, age, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5
42. diversity in the other culture(s)(such as differences in race, class, gender, age, ability, etc.) 0 1 2 3 4 5
43. dangers of generalizing individual behaviours as representative of the whole culture 0 1 2 3 4 5
44. my choices and their consequences (which made me either more, or less, acceptable by others) 0 1 2 3 4 5
45. my personal values that affected my approach to ethical dilemmas and their resolution 0 1 2 3 4 5
46. Others' reactions to me that reflected their cultural values 0 1 2 3 4 5
47. how my values and ethics were reflected in specific situations 0 1 2 3 4 5

Thank you for your collaboration

Appendix F : The Tasks

Week 1/ Topic: Celebrations.

Task. Happy New year .This week we are going to speak about celebrations

Q1- In which occasions do you celebrate?

Q2- How do you celebrate?

Objectives.

- To raise learners' awareness of their own culture
- To raise learners' awareness of others' culture
- To develop empathy and tolerance in learners'
- To develop the written capacity of learners.

Class task.

Learners were asked before hand to prepare critical incidents to present them in class (discussing different topics including: education, time management, celebrations, parties, eating...).

Objectives

- Develop oral proficiency
- Turn taking etiquette while communicating
- To raise learners awareness and knowledge of other cultures.

The online outcome

Learners would agree on the most important occasions that they celebrate be they religious or national. They would express difference in the way they celebrate. They show respect and interest towards difference be it national or cross-cultural.

The class outcome

Learners would reach for different critical incidents to present them in class. They would try to guess the cause behind the misunderstanding addressed by other classmates' critical incidents, and discuss them to come to the reasons or to the cultural differences to be aware of.

Week 2/ Topic: Non-verbal communication.

Online task. Do you know what is nonverbal communication.

It refers to; communication that is produced by some means other than words (eye contact, body language, or vocal cues, for example) (Knapp & Hall, 2002). Nonverbal communication is bound to culture.

Do you recognize, or can you give meaning to, any of these gestures?

Do they mean the same in other cultures that you know?

Give others with their interpretation in your culture (or others if possible)?.

In class task.

In class learners play “who is this? Game”.

The latter requires learners to be a divided into two groups. Then, they select one member from group one to perform with gestures and to try to explain to his friends of the same group a word that the second group selected and so on. The winner is the group that could perform successfully and find the mysterious word.

Objective

- To raise learners’ awareness concerning the importance of non-verbal communication
- To develop learners’ awareness about their first language non-verbal communication and compare it to others in other cultures.

Week 3/ Topic: Conversation and silence

Online task

Is it acceptable for people in your culture to sit together silently?

Is silence a natural part of conversation, or is it regarded as awkward and uncomfortable?

How long can the silence last?

Do you use silence to convey messages? How often? If yes, explain giving examples of such situations.

In class

This session is used to provide feedback for learners, this feedback is divided into two types

- 1- A feedback related to their writing skill, in an attempt to spot light on the most famous mistakes that learners repeat.
- 2- A feedback related to the way they analyze things, in an attempt to draw their attention to hidden ideas in order to develop their critical thinking.

To fulfill these aims both the homework of week 6-7 and their online writings were discussed.

Week 4/ Online task

After watching a video through which some evidence about the shape of the earth, i.e., where the person tries to prove that the earth is flat, learners are asked to discuss this debatable issue guided by some questions:

- Do you think this person is right?
- Do you disagree?
- What are the arguments you may use to convince others?

Objective

- To raise learners' critical thinking
- To develop learners' ability to debate and argue in a respectful manner.
- To develop learners' ability to accept the different others.

In class activities

Based on learners' requests and interests, the topic selected for class discussion is religious

This discussion is mainly guided by these questions:

- Is there really a western war against Islam, or media is exaggerating?
- Do westerns dislike Islam and Muslims?
- Are we supposed to hate them as well as, as a response?

The pointed out outcome

Learners are supposed to give contradicting arguments and to submit them for discussion. They are supposed to come at the end of discussion to an agreement to answer these questions in a realistic way without generalizing stereotypes or being ethnocentric.

Objective

- Developing learners critical thinking
- Avoiding the generalization of stereotypes and judgments based on beliefs of superiority and ethnocentrism.

Week 5/ Online tasks

Group 1: Work together to write an exhaustive list of the things that you should do, and that you should not do (list of do(s) and don't(s)) that you should be aware of if you gain a scholarship to England and you will travel soon.

Group 2: Work together to write an exhaustive list of the things that you should do, and that you should not do (list of do(s) and don't(s)) that you should be aware of if you gain a scholarship to Brazil and you will travel soon.

Group 3: Work together to write an exhaustive list of the things that you should do, and that you should not do (list of do(s) and don't(s)) that you should be aware of if you gain a scholarship to America/ USA and you will travel soon.

Group 4: Work together to write an exhaustive list of the things that you should do, and that you should not do (list of do(s) and don't(s)) that you should be aware of if you gain a scholarship to Japan and you will travel soon.

The outcome

- Learners will work together to write a list of do(s) and don't(s)
- They will need to investigate about the target culture
- They exchange information about these different cultures since each group is working on a different one.
- They will negotiate the information they will find.

Objective

- To develop cross-cultural awareness
- To develop learners' ethnorelativism.

Week 6/ Online task

Do you think that the climate is really changing, if yes, what should we do?

The pointed out outcome

Learners are supposed to give contradicting arguments and to submit them for discussion. They are supposed to come at the end of discussion to an agreement to answer these questions in a realistic way without generalizing stereotypes or being ethnocentric.

Objective

- Developing learners critical thinking
- Avoiding the generalization of stereotypes and judgments based on beliefs of superiority and ethnocentrism.

Week 7/ Online task

Learners are divided into subgroups of five or six members. These subgroups are a mixture of Algerian and Brazilian learners. They are asked to discuss a particular topic and to come at conclusions. By the end of the second week, they are required to write a report of the discussion and its results and give it to the teacher.

Learners belonging to different subgroups work on different tasks, however, the Facebook group feature allows them to see what others are discussing and learn from the information that occur.

The group feature allows teachers to interfere in case of any misunderstanding between the distant participants, and also allows for providing direction and instruction when needed.

This project work is directed by a list of do's and don'ts

Do:

- Respect group members and their cultural and religious beliefs

- Respond to other members' posts
- Give examples or refer to sources to support your opinions
- Be willing to negotiate and consider different points of view.

Don'ts:

- Take comments personally
- Use obscene or vulgar language
- Assume or jump to conclusions.

Tasks

- 1- What are some justifiable reasons to use a social network like Facebook to learn a language?
- 2- How can interacting on social media provide valuable lessons on global citizenship?
- 3- What is critical thinking and how we develop it when we learn a language?
- 4- Why should cross-cultural understanding or intercultural awareness be a school curriculum subject?
- 5- Making global connections through digital platforms like Facebook teaches us how to adopt to different situations and to appreciate our own cultural identity
- 6- What are the most violated human rights today and how can social media help us combat these violations?
- 7- Stereotypes and different types of prejudice are the reason for many of the world's common conflicts. Do social media and the internet aggravate these stereotypes and prejudices?
- 8- Does social media addiction really exist? If so, is it safe to learn about language and culture?
- 9- In what ways can technology help us discover our own culture? Why is this paramount for our intercultural awareness?

Week 8/ Online task

Let us learn about each other's culture.

Complete the sentence: I would like to know more about.... (something related to Algerian or Brazilian culture)

Objectives

- Raise learners' awareness of their own culture
- Raise learners' awareness of the other culture
- Raise interaction between the distant learners
- Raise cultural knowledge.

The pointed outcome

Learners would be able to talk and describe different elements within their culture.

Week 9/Online task

How about if we share pictures this week?

Share pictures in your neighborhood or in nearby places that you consider typically Brazilian, or typically Algerian.

Objective

- Raise learners' awareness of their own culture
- Raise learners' awareness of the other culture
- Raise interaction between the distant learners
- Raise cultural knowledge.

The pointed outcome

Learners would be able to talk and describe different elements within their culture.

Week 10/ Online task.

This week instructions are in an audio recording click on the link to receive your mission

<http://vocaroo.com/i/sOmlmNOLFCCs>

you can record on your smart phone and upload the file directly.

Resumé

La présente recherche vise à étudier l'impact de l'intégration de l'expérience sociale des apprenants, l'utilisation de Facebook, sur le développement de leur compétence communicative interculturelle. La présente étude est basée sur l'hypothèse suivante : si l'expérience du réseau social Facebook était intégrée et partagée dans des salles de classe de langues étrangères, les apprenants en tireraient un meilleur bénéfice en développant leur compétence communicative interculturelle. Suivant une approche d'apprentissage mixte, l'intégration a eu lieu au sein d'un projet télé-collaboratif conçu en collaboration avec un enseignant Brésilien, Stephan Hughes. Les apprenants de Master Un au département d'anglais de l'Université Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia / Jijel et leurs homologues Brésiliens ont interagi les uns avec les autres, guidés par des tâches hebdomadaires dans un groupe Facebook nommé «Cross Cultural Critical Thinkers», créé à cet effet. Le projet télé-collaboratif a duré plus de trois mois, débutant en mi-janvier jusqu'à la fin du mois d'avril 2017, après avoir été piloté au premier semestre de la même année académique. L'évaluation du projet était à la fois quantitative et qualitative; trois outils de recherche ont été appliqués et triangulés : L'évaluation de la compétence interculturelle développée par Fantini et Tirmizi en 2006 a servi de pré-test et de post-test; l'observation des participants était basée sur leur interaction à la fois en classe et en ligne; et les groupes de discussion ont été menés à la fin du projet. Les résultats ont indiqué que les apprenants de «Master Un» qui ont participé au projet ont obtenu des améliorations dans les diverses capacités qui constituent la compétence de communication interculturelle, bien qu'ils ont montré des variations individuelles. L'efficacité du projet a été étayée par les résultats de l'étude comparative, les apprenants qui ont participé au projet ont surpassé ceux qui n'ont pas participé, c'est-à-dire les apprenants «Master Un» au Centre universitaire de Mila, malgré le fait qu'ils avaient acquis le même programme et les mêmes cours. La présente étude est conclue en décrivant les limites de l'étude ainsi que des propositions afin d'aider à améliorer les futures recherches dans le domaine.

ملخص

يهدف هذا البحث إلى دراسة تأثير دمج التجربة الاجتماعية للمتعلمين و المتمثلة في استخدام موقع التواصل الاجتماعي فايسبوك، على تطوير الكفاءة التواصلية بين الثقافات. وقد بُنيت هذه الدراسة على فرضية مفادها أنه إذا تم دمج تجربة فايسبوك ومشاركتها في فصول تعليم اللغة الأجنبية، فسيستفيد المتعلمون منها بشكل أفضل في تطوير الكفاءة التواصلية بين الثقافات. بعد اتباع منهج تعليمي مدمج، تمت عملية الدمج ضمن مشروع تعليمي عن بعد تم تصميمه بالتعاون مع مدرس برازيلي، اسمه ستيفان هيوز. وقد شملت الدراسة 126 طالباً في السنة الأولى ماستر بقسم اللغة الإنجليزية لجامعة محمد صديق بن يحيى / جيجل ونظرائهم من الطلبة البرازيليين، والذين تفاعلوا مع بعضهم البعض مسترشدين بالمهام الأسبوعية المنشورة في مجموعة على الفايسبوك تدعى "Cross Cultural Critical Thinkers" و التي أنشئت لهذا الغرض. استمر مشروع التعاون لأكثر من ثلاثة أشهر، انطلاقاً من منتصف شهر يناير حتى نهاية شهر أبريل 2017، بعد أن تم تجريبه في الفصل الأول من نفس العام الدراسي. وقد تمّ تقييم المشروع بأسلوب كميّ ونوعي، اين تم استخدام ثلاثة أدوات: أولاً استخدام "تقييم الكفاءة بين الثقافات" الذي وضعه فانتييني وتيرميري في عام 2006 كاختبار مسبق واختبار نهائي؛ ثانياً مراقبة المشاركين وتفاعلهم في كل من الفصول وعلى الإنترنت؛ ثالثاً اجراء مناقشات مجموعة التركيز في نهاية المشروع. وقد أشارت النتائج إلى أن طلبة السنة الأولى ماستر الذين شاركوا في المشروع حققوا تحسناً في القدرات المختلفة التي تشكل كفاءة التواصل بين الثقافات، وإن أظهروا بعض الاختلافات الفردية، وقد تم دعم نجاعة المشروع بشكل أكبر من خلال نتائج الدراسة المقارنة، والتي لوحظ من خلالها تفوق المتعلمين الذين شاركوا في المشروع على أولئك الذين لم يشاركوا، وهم طلبة السنة الأولى ماستر بالمركز الجامعي لولاية ميله، على الرغم من أن لديهم نفس المناهج الدراسية. واختتمت هذه الرسالة بإحاطة بالعراقيل التي رافقت هذه الدراسة، واقتراحات لتحسين نتائج البحوث المستقبلية في نفس الميدان.