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**Developing Learners' Intercultural Communicative Competence through
Transmedia Storytelling: An Integrative Approach**

The Case of Second Year Students at the Department of English at Larbi Tebessi University
of Tebessa

Thesis Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for
the Degree of LMD Doctorate in Didactics of Foreign Languages and Cultures

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Declaration

I, Souhaila FARES, hereby declare that the presented thesis entitled “Developing Learners’ Intercultural Communicative Competence through Transmedia Storytelling: An Integrative Approach”, and supervised by Dr. Nassira BOUDERSA -that I am submitting for the purpose of obtaining the Degree of LMD Doctorate- presents my original research. Therefore, I certify that this authentic piece of work is written by myself, and that it contains no material that has been previously submitted for a degree or other academic qualification. I, then, affirm that I have used no other sources except those that are referred to in the references.

Ms. Souhaila FARES

Date: September, 2025

“O mankind, We have created you from male and female and made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Verily, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.” (Qur’an , Surat AL-Hujurat, 13)

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high; Where knowledge is free; Where the world has not been broken up into fragments By narrow domestic walls; Where words come out from the depth of truth; Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection; Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way Into the dreary desert sand of dead habit; Where the mind is led forward by thee Into ever-widening thought and action—
Into that heaven of freedom. — Rabindranath Tagore

“The universe is made of stories, not of atoms.” — Muriel Rukeyser

Dedications

I dedicate this work to:

My Father, for his encouragement, prayers, and his unshakable faith in me

My mother, whose unconditioned love and absolute support lighten my path. Your nurturing shaped me into who I am today

My brother Safouane, my closest confidant, whose presence means the world to me

My sister Mimi, your belief in me has been my greatest motivation. You are my everything

My niblings Rafif, Amani, and Djoud Allah, whose innocence fills my heart with happiness

My family members and friends

My colleagues

You are the reason I never gave up

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Abstract

Amid the unprecedented tempo of interconnectedness that is driven by globalisation, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education has framed its priorities around preparing interculturally competent learners. Reflecting this dynamic, the current study aims at investigating the effectiveness of Transmedia Storytelling (TS) in developing EFL learners' Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC). To gain robust results, we used a mixed-methods approach by merging qualities from both the qualitative approach and the quantitative approach. Initially, we explored the intercultural load in second-year Oral Expression (OE) syllabus at the Department of English at Larbi Tebessi University (LTU) that enabled us to validate our research problem and affirm that the intercultural dimension is required. As a consecutive procedure, we conducted a semester-long observation of OE teachers' practices to explore and examine how the OE *Canevas* is enacted in their teaching practices. To bridge the gap at the macro level, in-depth interviews were carried out with inspectors from the Ministry of High Education and Scientific Research (MESRS). Based on the exploratory phase's results which revealed that ICC is unaddressed in the context of our study, a quasi-experimental design was conducted on a sample of 76 second-year students, forming the Experimental Group (EG=38), and the Control Group (CG=38). Furthermore, questionnaires were administered to both second-year students and teachers at the Department of English at LTU. The obtained results revealed that integrating the intercultural dimension through TS in second-year OE syllabus at the Department of English at LTU develops students' ICC. This implies that the EG's participants who were involved in the intervention phase outperformed the CG in all the aspects of ICC, and hence the alternative hypothesis was confirmed. Based on the research findings, several implications and recommendations are advanced.

Keywords: English as a Foreign Language; Transmedia Storytelling; Intercultural Communicative Competence; The Oral Expression Syllabus; the intercultural dimension.

List of Acronyms, Abbreviations, and Mathematical Symbols

1. Acronyms

AIC	The Assessment of Intercultural Competence
APA	The American Psychology Association
CC	Communicative Competence
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
CG	Control Group
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
CoE	Council of Europe
DMIS	Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity
DV	Dependent Variable
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EG	Experimental Group
FEIL	The Federation of the Experiment in International Living
FL	Foreign Language
FLT	Foreign Language Teaching
H0	Null Hypothesis
H1	Alternative Hypothesis
ICC	Intercultural Communicative Competence
IDI	Intercultural Development Inventory
IoC	The Internationalisation at Home
IoHE	The Internationalisation at Home of Higher Education
IV	Independent Variable
LARP	Live-Action Role Playing
LMD	Licence Master Doctorate

LTU	Larbi Tebessi University
MESRS	Ministry of High Education and Scientific Research
OE	Oral Expression
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PT	Progress Test
SAI	Self Awareness Inventories
SFL	Systemic Functional Linguistics
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
Std. Deviation	Standard Deviation
TC	Target Culture
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
TmSE	Transmedia Storytelling Edutainment
TS	Transmedia Storytelling

2. Abbreviations

eg	Example
et al.	AUTHORS of a work, when they are more than three co-authors
n.d.	No date
Viz.	Videlicet
Vs.	Versus

3. Mathematical Symbols

N	Population
n.	Sample
p	Probability
r	Correlation

Sig. Significance

α Alpha

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General Introduction

1. Background of the Study

Due to the ascendance of globalisation and its unprecedented levels of interconnectedness across nations, the way individuals communicate and interact has accordingly changed with grandeur (Conway & Nik, 2014). Globalisation is now considered as a dominant force that shapes global dynamics, which has magnified the demand for an international connectivity. However, such interaction can be challenged by the need to develop an intercultural communicative proficiency that is profoundly essential for individuals to navigate, act, and react in diverse social, academic, and professional landscapes.

In a world where a hybridist of cultures is increased and distinctions are blurred, the English language has transcended its position to eminence as the predominant lingua franca. Due to both the influential leading status of English and the extensive cross-cultural contact that has been brought up by globalisation, the focus of teaching in Foreign Language (FL) contexts has been transformed to shift toward the development of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) as an indispensable pedagogical goal (Byram, 1997). This concept is conceived as the ability to effectively and appropriately interact in diverse cultural setting (Byram, 2000). Therefore, Foreign Language Teaching (FLT) has been in a quest for meeting modern education's expectations and developing interculturally competent learners.

Following the urgent need to interculturalize FL education, the literature on ICC has been steadily developing in didactic discourse since the early 1990s. The concept of ICC was initially popularized by the multi-layered works of Michael Byram (1997) who has significantly influenced the field of FLT with his practical model for the teaching and assessment of ICC. Within this model, Byram (1997) emphasized five key aspects of ICC, commonly referred to as *Savoirs*, viz., knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, attitudes, and critical cultural awareness. Byram's (1997) outlined

model targets the development of ICC that is essential for learners to effectively engage and successfully communicate in intercultural interactions.

ICC models are well-referenced in the literature of the present study. They have been remarkably implemented in our study design, and in the development of the different assessment tools within the current study. Research studies that underpin the current research have tremendously stressed the pedagogical integration of ICC in FLT contexts. Kramersch's (1993) notion of "the third place" called for the need for learners to create an intercultural space, whereby they can mediate between their local culture and the target culture. Similarly, Deardorff's (2006) intercultural model highlighted the ongoing nature of developing ICC. Her (2006) framework is widely implemented in education and training programmes for the sake of measuring ICC development.

After establishing a sound ground for ICC framework with foundational theories, focus in research about ICC within FLT have shifted concerns to seek empirical evidence about the impact of implementing the intercultural dimension into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching and learning to develop learners' ICC. In effect, modern ELT curricula are increasingly aligned with prioritizing ICC as a core objective. In this vein, Sercu (2005) found that incorporating the intercultural dimension into language curricula is unquestionably vital in enhancing learners' ICC.

The shift to an interculturalized language education highly requires the development of intercultural-based syllabi (Fløttum, 2007). The latter are reflective, learner-centred, and adaptive to the diversity of sociocultural contexts. That is why integrating the intercultural dimension in EFL syllabi has gained much attention among policy-makers and educators in the field of EFL teaching and learning.

In line with the growing demand for ICC, Ellis and Wulff (2020) called for incorporating intercultural tasks into EFL syllabi to promote intercultural learning. Recent

studies have been exploring innovative approaches to integrate the intercultural dimension in English syllabi and, thus, develop EFL learners' ICC, including that of O'dowd and Dooly Owenby (2020). O'dowd and Dooly Owenby (2020) are among many researchers who highlighted the effectiveness of exchange programmes in developing EFL learners' ICC; exchange programmes are, however, considered as limited in their reach and efficiency. By the same token, Rezaei (2015) proposed an alternative approach wherein short stories can be implemented in EFL syllabi to prepare learners for effective intercultural interactions. In fact, the use of traditional approaches to develop English learners' ICC has been criticized for failing to align with the demands of the 21st century. In response to the deficiencies of these narrow-scope suggestions, the need for more innovative and practical approaches has been emphasized.

Within the 21st century education, where learners' centeredness is vital, integrating traditional approaches often falls short of addressing diverse learning preferences and needs. Hence, as a modern and innovative approach, Transmedia Storytelling (TS) is capable of bridging this gap. By utilizing multiple media platforms to narrate interconnected stories (Jenkins, 2006), TS not only engages learners but also facilitates differentiated instruction and; more importantly, it fosters learners' intercultural communicative proficiency.

2. Statement of the Problem

In the Algerian EFL contexts, the teaching of English has risen to prominence due to its global status. Currently, educational authorities deem that the study of English is essential for learners across diverse fields and levels. However, a good deal of English syllabi which are currently in use have rarely undergone changes that address the content. In line with this situational status, students who pursue their university studies in English are instructed based on course syllabi that are not often designed to meet the ultimate goal of successfully communicating in diverse cultural settings. The English syllabi in use might be greatly pivoting

on developing learners' linguistic competence. Therefore, students who are taking EFL courses might end up making a fairly good command of language (grammar, syntax, vocabulary, pronunciation, and the like), but they may also show some serious cultural deficiency and misunderstanding in conversational exchange, be it with native speakers or among themselves.

Within the scope of practice, the English syllabi at the departments of English at Algerian universities comprise different modules, few of them might integrate the intercultural dimension. In fact, culture might be integrated in English syllabi as a secondary adjunct. It is quite known that modules like American and British civilisations as well as literature integrate culture through some traditional narrations of the history of the American and British people or an analysis of literary works. By doing so, one cannot assume that these courses can effectively demonstrate positive outcomes in developing learners' ICC. Integrating intercultural components to course syllabi should, therefore, exceed the course of content-based modules.

The curricula of Oral Expression (OE) that offer, by nature, an excellent framework in which intercultural components can be integrated to develop Algerian EFL learners' ICC is, de facto, non-culturally responsive. In this vein, Byram (2004) emphasized that culture learning needs to be experiential and it is less achievable if limited to the confines of decontextualized classrooms. Since learners have almost no chance to practise communication in the target language speaking countries, OE and speaking sessions can be modeled to match an authentic setting where intercultural situations arise.

However, OE syllabi in use might not be oriented toward intercultural learning. Upon carrying out a study at the university of Batna 2, Mizab (2020) found that all educational stakeholders assume that EFL syllabi are not interculturalized. Moreover, Haddaoui (2019) found similar results which confirmed that English syllabi at the Department of English at Setif University are oriented to the grammatical linguistic view of language learning, and not to

intercultural learning. Similarly, through designing an intercultural-based syllabus, Boualli (2025) attempted to overcome the deficiency in embedding the intercultural dimension in the OE syllabus at the Teachers' Training School at Constantine which she (2025) assumed that it prioritizes linguistic and communicative skills at the expense of developing students' ICC.

Considering the OE syllabus at the Department of English at Larbi Tebessi University (LTU) of Tebessa, it can be said that there is no clear long-term vision of the integration of culture and the least inclusion of cultural elements. This research problem was supported by our exploratory study via document analysis and classroom observations which both validate our research problem and confirm the lack of the intercultural load in second-year OE syllabus at the Department of English at LTU.

To clearly state the problem, we posit that the integration of the intercultural dimension in language curriculum, and more specifically in EFL syllabi in the subject of OE, within Algerian higher education, remains superficial at both the macro and micro levels. As a natural result of the lack of guidance, some Algerian EFL teachers might even lack the appropriate approaches, methods, techniques, and recommendations to integrate the intercultural aspects into their language classes. Therefore, an urgent need to explore the issue and conduct comprehensive research into the integration of the intercultural dimension in planning English course with a consideration of the 21st century demands should be carried out.

3. Aims of the Study

Since our study is two-fold, the research aims are accordingly formulated. First, the current study aims at exploring whether decision makers and stakeholders recognize the importance of intercultural learning in the Algerian EFL education. Within the same line of thought, this study attempts to examine both the intercultural load of the OE syllabus at the Department of English at LTU, and how it is enacted in teachers' practices inside the classrooms in term of ICC teaching, framing both as a reflection of the institutional curriculum. The second

aim stems from the belief that to communicate effectively when interacting with others, who are not only linguistically but also culturally different, Algerian EFL learners are required to develop an ICC. Accordingly, the study aims at designing a course and advancing an innovative approach that would enhance Algerian EFL learners' ICC. For this aim to be achieved, a shift toward an interculturality-based syllabus is highly and urgently required.

Subsequently, the overall aim of the present study is to introduce the intercultural dimension within the OE syllabus by means of integrating Transmedia Storytelling. It is an attempt to shed light on the need as well as the effectiveness of integrating TS in English OE syllabus at the Department of English at LTU to achieve one of the ultimate educational goals of the 21st century, which is that of developing interculturality competent EFL learners.

4. Research Questions

The current study is guided by some necessary and related research questions. They are stated and addressed respectively as follow:

- a- Do policymakers and stakeholders, being essential agent at the macro level, account for the integration of ICC in EFL education?
- b- Is the intercultural dimension yielded in OE classes at the Department of English at LTU?
- c- To what extent does the integration of TS in the OE syllabus at LTU develop EFL learners' ICC?
- d- What specific aspects of ICC can be enhanced through the integration of TS into the OE syllabus?

5. Research Hypotheses

In the light of the aforementioned research aims and the stated research questions, it is hypothesized that:

➤ *Hypothesis of the Exploratory Research*

- Incorporating the intercultural dimension might be required in academic plannings of EFL curricula and syllabi in the Algerian higher education.

➤ *Hypothesis of the Experimental Research*

- If Transmedia Storytelling is integrated in second-year OE syllabus at LTU, Students' Intercultural Communicative Competence will significantly develop.

6. Research Methodology

The present study is framed within triangulated approaches, methods and data for the aim of ensuring the validity of the research (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018). In alignment with the intrinsic nature of this research, we opt for a mixed-methods approach by merging qualities from both the qualitative approach and the quantitative approach. On one hand, qualitative data are gathered by means of document evaluation that is conducted through a review of the intercultural load of second-year OE syllabus at the Department of English at LTU. As a consecutive procedure, a semester-long observation of OE teachers' practices is conducted to examine how the OE *Canevas* is reflected in teachers' instructional practices. To bridge the gap at the macro level, in-depth interviews are carried out with inspectors from the Ministry of High Education and Scientific Research (MESRS). On the other hand, quantitative data are gathered by means of three questionnaires that are administered to both second-year students and teachers at the Department of English at LTU. Furthermore, a quasi-experimental design is also conducted to identify and examine the effect of the intervention on the Dependent Variable (DV).

The mixed-methods approach is further layered to our research design. Within the mixed-methods approach, our design falls mainly into the exploratory sequential design with some aspects from the embedded design. As such, we initiated the study with an evaluation of second-year OE syllabus to examine and evaluate its intercultural load. For the purpose of

contextualizing the findings of our evaluation, we employ a semester-long observation of teachers' instructional practices. In the subsequent phase, quantitative data are collected by means of questionnaires that are administered to second-year students and teachers at the Department of English at LTU.

Furthermore, a quasi-experiment is undertaken to test the effectiveness of TS materials in developing EFL learners ICC. As noted, an interview with inspectors from the MESRS are also conducted. As for the embedded design, interviews are conducted with participants from the EG at the end of each instructional segment for the aim of reflecting on the progress and the effectiveness of the teaching intervention.

With regard to data analysis, a systematic process is followed to ensure accuracy, consistency, and meaningful interpretation of the results. Data preparation is an initial step within our structured research outline. In fact, preparing data entails cleaning the dataset from inconsistencies, and coding and categorizing qualitative data. As a successive step, data exploration is carefully handled whereby descriptive statistics are used by means of visualisation.

In the subsequent stage for quantitative data, inferential statistical techniques are employed to test hypotheses, while thematic or content analysis is carried out for qualitative data. By doing so, the results can be adequately interpreted in respect with the research's questions and aims of the study. Subsequently, the results are reported and presented, which paves the way for the final phase by presenting the implications of the findings, key recommendations for future research, and the study limitations.

7. Population and Sampling

In the scope of this research, the target population encompasses second-year LMD students at the Department of English at LTU in the academic year 2022-2023. The study also

involves teachers of OE from the same department, and inspectors from the MESRS pedagogical agencies.

The non-probability sampling technique was used to opt for the appropriate students' sample. From the overall population of 219 second-year EFL students, who were divided by the administration into six intact groups, 76 students, that form two groups, were selected using convenience non-probability sampling.

Within the quasi-experimental design, the 76 students are distributed between the Experimental Group (EG: n=38) and the Control Group (CG: n=38). It is worth noting that applying randomization was constrained due to the fact that the groups were predetermined by the administration. Purposefully, participants that are involved in the experiment are surveyed using the entrance questionnaire, and the post-treatment questionnaire (prior to and after the experiment).

As for the teachers' sample, the target respondents of our study and observation are OE teachers of second-year students at the Department of English at LTU during the academic year 2022-2023. For the questionnaire, it was administered to ten teachers in the English Department, who were teaching OE in that year, have previously taught it in previous years, or are specialized in it.

The population of the study also consists of general inspectors from the MESRS pedagogical agencies. Their contact information and e-mail addresses are available on the official website of the ministry (<https://www.mesrs.dz/index.php/fr/inspection-generale/>). The availability of their contact information allowed for direct communication to arrange interview meetings and negotiate accessibility.

8. Significance of the Study

In the current educational landscape, interculturality in language teaching and learning research and practice has gained growing interest worldwide. As globalisation persists to shape

language classrooms, considering new approaches that would enhance learners' ICC is highly required in both curriculum design and pedagogical practices. Influenced by these global trends, especially the frameworks that are established by the Council of Europe (CoE), that are, in turn, shaped by Byram's seminal work in 1997 and Common European Framework of Reference for Languages' (CEFR) publication in 2001 (CoF, 2009), recent research in the field of EFL education in the Algerian context has shifted interest to the integration of the intercultural dimension in EFL education. More specifically, this very interesting area of research is mountingly being explored in recent theses (eg. Bouakel, 2017; Khiari, 2022), articles (eg. Louahala, 2023; Soltani & Brakni, 2023), and examined in considerable academic conferences (eg. LTU, 2024; University of Batna, 2022, 2025). However, most of these studies are either theoretical in nature or restrainedly address the middle and secondary school education.

Extending the previous line of research, the present study is an evaluative and proactive approach that is oriented to cover the shortage in Algerian research that examines the integration of the intercultural dimension in EFL syllabi and its direct impact on the development of learners' ICC. In this context, Mizab (2020), for instance, recommended, in her doctoral thesis, joint work between the macro level (ministry) and the micro level (teachers) to explore an innovative approach to effectively embed the intercultural dimension into OE syllabi. Therefore, our study is multilayered as it aims at examining if policymakers and stakeholders account for the integration of the intercultural dimension in EFL syllabi, and therefore identify potential gaps in implementing ICC.

As traditional EFL instruction often falls short in cultivating intercultural competence in EFL contexts, TS, through its multimodal and participatory nature, is able to effectively develop and enhance EFL learners' ICC. Besides, in suggesting TS as an innovative pedagogical approach for ICC development, this research takes into account the 21st century

particularities, especially learners' centredness and differentiation. Overall, this research contributes to a broader understanding of how TS can develop meaningful intercultural interactions via equipping Algerian EFL learners with the necessary competences to effectively and successfully communicate in globalised intercultural settings.

9. Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into five chapters. The first chapter establishes a critical review of the existing literature about the integration of ICC in FLT, with an attempt to locate our research problem in previous research in the area. Hence, the first chapter initially provides a theoretical framework of culture and intercultural teaching with an emphasis on the concept of ICC. Within this chapter, we highlight Communicative Competence (CC) as a precursor to ICC. Devoting extended sections of this chapter for ICC teaching and assessment models is unquestionably necessary for both the theoretical considerations and the fieldwork of our research. Finally, interculturalizing EFL curricula and syllabi is overviewed.

The second chapter explores the role of TS in EFL education. First of all, it introduces theoretical foundations of TS by elaborating on its definitions, principles, and its multi-environmental nature in media synergy. In addition, the origins and evolution of TS are discussed to contextualize the term within convergence culture and participatory media. Moreover, this chapter examines TS as a pedagogical strategy through discussing its compatibility with intercultural communicative teaching and learning environment, as well as its potentials in developing EFL learners 21st century skills. Furthermore, the chapter provides a theoretical ground for the various approaches to integrating TS in EFL contexts. At the end of the chapter, we address the significance of TS in contemporary EFL education, emphasizing its use in cultivating intercultural learning.

Chapter three expounds on the research methodology design followed in this research. It outlines the study's philosophical and procedural frameworks of the study that justify the

choice of the research methods and the research instruments. This is to be followed by an identification of research variables for clarifying the measurable elements in the study. A section of this chapter focuses on identifying the research setting and the participants. An extended section is completely devoted to tools of data collection along with their rationales and limitations. This part is to followed by an explanation of data analysis procedures. Finally, the third chapter casts light on ethical considerations that are related to the research under investigation.

The fourth chapter is concerned with methodically clustering the findings and, then, critically analysing and interpreting them. It thoroughly elicits underlying patterns, manipulates variables' relationships, tests our hypotheses, and provides straightforward answers to our research questions. Chapter four unfolds in two sections that are consistent with the exploratory phase and the explanatory phase. Within the exploratory phase, findings of the document evaluation, teachers' observations, and inspectors' interview are presented. Data analyses and interpretations are, then, yielded to validate our research gap, insightfully answer the first and second research questions, and test our first hypothesis. The explanatory phase is subsequently outlined in the second section of the chapter in which results of the questionnaires, the pretest, the progress tests, and the post-test are thoroughly discussed. Within this phase, the third and fourth research questions are addressed, and the experimental hypothesis is either confirmed or rejected.

Chapter five provides an abridged interpretation and synthesis of the research findings. Besides, it thoroughly revisits the responses to the research questions and the research hypotheses with regard to the obtained results. Lastly, the provision of the core pedagogical implications, recommendations, and suggestions for future researchers are outlined in this chapter. Finally, the limitations and delimitations of the current study are discussed.

10. Conceptual and Operational Definitions

In the context of the present research, two main variables frame the scope of the study: Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) which is the Dependent Variable (DV), and Transmedia Storytelling (TS) which is the Independent Variable (IV). In what follows, both their conceptual and operational definitions are provided so as to establish a clear terminology of the variables under investigation.

10.1. Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)

10.1.1. Conceptual Definition

ICC refers to the ability to successfully and effectively communicate with people from different cultures besides one's own culture. According to Byram (1997), ICC encompasses five core elements that are commonly known as *savoirs*: *savoirs* (knowledge), *savoir-être* (attitudes of openness and curiosity), *savoir-comprendre* (skills of interpreting and relating), *savoir-apprendre* (skills of discovery and interaction), and *savoir s'engager* (critical cultural awareness). Further studies in the field have enlarged the concept to include cognitive, affective, and behavioural aspects (eg. Chen and Starosta, 2000). Deardorff (2006) perceived the concept as a developmental process that is influenced by individuals' intercultural experiences. Moreover, Fantini (2009) added that ICC should be viewed from a relational perspective; that is to say, the mutual understandings between interlocutors.

10.1.2. Operational Definition

In the context of this study, the term ICC is operationalized to refer to the individual's ability to effectively and appropriately interact with people from different cultural background, by demonstrating appropriate knowledge, attitudes, and skills. ICC is measured through the five intercultural components- knowledge, attitudes, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction- at different stages of the study. To assess these five dimensions, questionnaires, tests, classroom observations, TS tasks, and interviews are employed.

10.2. Transmedia Storytelling (TS)

10.2.1. Conceptual Definition

TS refers to the integrated experiences across multiple media where a cohesive narrative unfolds across different channels, each contributing to the overall story (Jenkins, 2006). In the same vein, Scolari (2009) defined TS as an inter-semiotic practice that involves both distributing the narrative across different channels and creating a transmedia narrative universe. This implies that TS allows learners to engage in the narrative and become active participants rather than passive recipients of the narrative. From an educational perspective, TS resonates with constructivist and participatory pedagogies (Alper & Herr-Stephenson, 2013; Raybourn, 2014). As such, TS offers authentic and learner-centered experience. It also supports learners' individual differences and learning styles by engaging them in diverse media modes (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000).

10.2.2. Operational Definition

TS is operationally defined in this study to mean the instructional use of a narrative that unfolds across multiple media outlets like texts, images, audios, videos, and digital tools. Each medium uniquely contributes to overall narrative. TS is measured through the engagement of learners in creating, interpreting, and developing story content across different platforms. This engagement is demonstrated through classroom activities, assignments, and reflective interviews.

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Introduction

In today's globalized world, the intensity of global interconnectedness transcends geographical and cultural barriers. On that note, intersecting language and culture is assuredly indispensable for effective EFL education. As such, ICC is increasingly recognized as a critical component in EFL education. The driving vision of this chapter resides in establishing a profound critical review of our dependent variable. In particular, it addresses the integration of ICC in Foreign Language (FL) teaching and learning. Therefore, this chapter unfolds in seven sections of theoretical underpinnings.

The first section of the chapter overviews language and culture as a binary system and explores the cultural turn in EFL education. Following this section, the conceptualisation of ICC as a core component in EFL education is established. Within this section, we highlight CC as a precursor to ICC. Including CC in tracing the growth of ICC is intentional for the sake of illuminating its delimits in not fully accounting for the socio-cultural factors in EFL education. After establishing a precise conceptualisation of ICC, devoting an extended section of this chapter for ICC models is unquestionably necessary for both the theoretical considerations and the fieldwork of our research.

Based on ICC models, the fourth section is centred around the intercultural speaker and global intercultural competence. This section is inserted in this order because its emergence is intricately connected with ICC models. In what follows, the fifth section of this chapter is an account of how ICC is assessed that in turn will guide part of the methodology employed in this study. The two last sections overview the interculturalization of EFL materials by discussing the integration of ICC in EFL curricula and syllabi as well as the integration strategies that are implemented by educators.

1.1.The Nexus of Language and Culture

The interrelatedness of language and culture has been widely examined among researchers across multiple disciplines, including ethnography, anthropology, cultural studies, sociology, and linguistics. Addressing the interplay of these entities requires a consideration of both the conceptualisation of the term culture across various areas of study and how language and culture intertwine. Therefore, the aim of this section is to build an understanding of culture as a concept with a focus on its role in shaping educational perspectives, and to examine how language relates and interacts with culture within educational contexts.

1.1.1. Defining Culture

To critically engage with the term ‘culture’ and provide a baseline for the present research, a good starting point would be a definition of the concept. Culture has largely been the focus of enquiry across a range of research disciplines such as anthropology, ethnography, cultural studies, sociology, and linguistics (Atamna, 2008). Each field of study, and even within the same discipline, has viewed culture differently reflecting their own perceptions. Despite the existence of a large body of literature to define culture, its vagueness and multifaceted nature make it challenging to establish a straightforward definition of the term. In this respect, Williams (1983) stated that culture is “one of the two or three complicated words in English language” (p. 37).

In an attempt to delimit the wide array of interpretations of the term ‘culture’, the two anthropologists Alfred L Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn (1952) compiled over 100 definitions of culture in their book *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*. They (1952) categorized the definitions of culture according to their description, timeline order and their field of study.

The most basic definition, to start with, is from a normative perspective which typically distinguishes between small c culture and big C culture. As such, Richards and Schmidt (2003) defined culture in their dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics as:

The set of practices, codes, values that mark a particular nation or group: the sum of a nation or group's most highly thought of works of literature, art, music, etc. A difference is sometimes made between 'high' culture of literature and art, and small 'c' culture of attitude, value, beliefs, and everyday lifestyles. (p. 138)

To put it differently, small c culture refers to the localized and everyday aspects of culture like the food, the language, and the clothing of a certain social group. No less important is big C culture that entails the aspects that shape the identity and the values of a society including literature, art, music, and philosophy. This distinction between small c culture and capital C culture is widely accepted and referred to in the field of language teaching and learning. As such, Wintergerst and Mcveigh (2010) believed that by acquiring both the big C culture and the small c culture, students can effectively interact in an intercultural milieu.

A more pioneering and complex definition of culture that is said to be the most quoted is the one provided by Edward B. Taylor. According to Taylor (1871), culture is "the complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of a society" (p.1). This anthropological definition implies that culture includes both thoughts and actions that are learned and shared within a social group. According to him (1871), culture refers to the norms that govern their members' behaviours. Clearly, Taylor's definition has been a subject of debate among scholars across and within the field of anthropology.

Unlike Taylor (1871), the anthropologist Geertz (1973) believed that culture can be both inherited or acquired. For him (1973) culture is "a historically transmitted patterns of meanings embodied in symbols" (p.89). This shared knowledge that is manifested through societal norms

enables individuals of the same social group to behave appropriately in different cultural settings. It is important to mention that despite the criticism Taylor received, his view on culture as being learnt and developed is largely supported by recent research in anthropology. Within this context, Baker and Ishikawa (2021) believed that conceptualising culture as learnt, and not inherited, is a core concept in anthropology, education, and cultural studies.

Another closely related definition of culture is that of Duranti (1997) who noted that culture is “something learned, transmitted, passed down from one generation to the next, though human actions, often in the form of face-to-face interaction and of course through linguistic communication” (p. 24). In this vein, culture and language are intertwined as language is considered as a medium throughout which culture is expressed and conveyed.

The definitions of culture, as provided by anthropologists, has been adopted by scholars in other disciplines including that of linguistics. In his book *Linguistics Across Cultures*, Lado (1957) stated that culture is ‘the way of people’ (p. 52). Similarly, Brown (2000) noted that culture is ‘the way of life’ (p. 173). Given these definitions, one can note that culture refers to the social behaviours that affiliate members of the same group and identify them from others. Linguistically speaking, Kramsch (1998a) noted that culture is “membership in a discourse community that shares a common social space and history and common imaginings” (p.10). Kramsch (1998a) believed that members who use the same linguistic code shared common ways of viewing the world.

In spite of the plentiful definitions of the term culture that anthropologists and linguists have provided, educationalists have succeeded to be more precise to reflect on specific perspectives when referring to second and FL instruction. Robinson (1985) covered the different attributes of culture that are considered in second and FL field of study. He (1985) approached these various aspects of culture from multiple perspectives.

As per Robinson's (1985) insights, culture is viewed from a behavioural standpoint as observable human behaviour like customs and rituals of a certain social group. This is manifested in language education through the teaching of native speakers' daily practices. From a functionalist view, culture is seen as rule-governed behaviour, this would give language learners the needed knowledge to comprehend why native speakers behave in specific contexts. In a cognitive framework, culture is perceived as a set of mental processes, from memory to interpretation, mirroring computer data processing. Accordingly, teaching involves providing learners with an insider's view of the target culture. From a symbolic viewpoint, culture is a dynamic system of symbols and meanings shaped by individuals' worldviews. Teaching culture under this paradigm bridges learners' native and target cultural experiences to construct meaningful interpretations (Robinson, 1985). Together, these views of culture enrich language education by offering comprehensive insights into integrating cultural understanding into teaching practices.

In line with this, the definition of culture can be articulated as the set of practices, values, beliefs, behaviours, and experiences that guide individuals' conduct (Jandt, 2021). This acquired knowledge enables members of the same cultural setting to communicate and interact appropriately within the same culture. In the same scope, Moran (2001) noted that culture is "the ability to enter other cultures and communicate effectively and appropriately, establish and maintain relationships, and carry out tasks with people of these cultures" (p.5). In the light of this clear set of the terms, culture in the field of education goes beyond the course of civilization and literature to set at the heart of interaction and communication.

1.1.2. The Interrelatedness of Language and Culture

The relationship between language and culture is anchored in many disciplines including anthropology, ethnography, and sociolinguistics (Atamna, 2008). In anthropology, the interrelatedness between language and culture retraced to the mid-eighteenth century.

German scholars like Johann Herder (1744-1803) and Wilhelm Humboldt (1762-1835) explored the diversity of languages and cultures across the world, emphasizing the indissociability of language and culture. They (n.d.) claimed that people who speak a certain language think differently, and have their own ways of expressing the world. Going further, they (n.d.) believed that when people think differently, this results in having different spoken languages (as cited in Kramersch, 1998a).

Later in the nineteenth century, this view reappeared in the United States through the studies of Edward Sapir (1884-1939) and his pupil Benjamin Lee Whorf (1897-1941) on American Indian languages. Their studies on the relationship between language and culture were later known as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (Kramersch, 1998a). Whorf (1956) asserted that people from different cultural backgrounds think differently and that is resulted from the differences in the structure of their languages. This theory posits two main versions. The strong version suggested that (a) language determines our thought, which is known as language determinism. However, the weak version of the hypothesis is based on the view that (b) language influences our thought that is termed as linguistic relativity.

It is worth mentioning that the strong version of the hypothesis was largely scrutinized amongst scholars especially sociologists, discrediting the non-arbitrary link between the linguistic structure and a given cultural world (Kramersch, 1998a). On the contrary, the weak version of the hypothesis is generally accepted as it is supported by the view that “cultural differences in the semantic associations evoked by seemingly common concepts” (Kramersch, 1998a, p. 13). The theory is still significant and quoted by many researchers in the field of EFL education (Fantini, 1997).

Viewing language and culture as intertwined entities is also supported in the field of ethnography. Beside asserting their interrelatedness, ethnographers view language as a medium throughout which culture is expressed (Atamna, 2008). In this scope, Agar (1994) posited that

the relationship is viewed through the load of culture in language. Within the same line of thought, Galisson (1991) believed that language and culture are related in view of the fact that culture is seen in the language, aligning their relationship more to lexicology.

From the standpoint of sociolinguists, Hymes (1974) developed a key link between language and culture. He (1974) opposed Chomsky's linguistic theory, which views language in isolation from its context. He (1974), then, argued that the social knowledge is significant for an appropriate use of the language in different context, affirming that understanding language goes beyond understanding its structure (as cited in Bouakal, 2017).

As globalisation has reinforced English role as a global lingua franca, the relationship between language and culture is widely interpreted from the eye of linguistics. Risager (2006) elaborated the synergy between language and culture in linguistics from two distinct interpretation: The genetic sense and the differential sense. The genetic sense maintains that the interconnectedness of language and culture is a fundamental aspect of human experience. It emphasizes that all languages are inherently tied to the cultures. In this regard, language and culture are viewed as intertwined and mutually dependent. As far as the differential sense is concerned, language and culture are related; however, they can be separated to some extent since each language embodies its own cultural norms, that understand a language requires examining how it manifests in different context (Risager, 2006).

As another viewpoint, Kramersch (1998a) stated that understanding the relationship between language and culture is essential in language learning. Accordingly, she (1998a) highlighted three aspects of language in relation to culture: "Language expresses, embodies, and symbolizes cultural reality" (p.3). In few words, she (1998a) viewed language and culture as a binary system.

1.1.3. The Cultural Shift in Foreign Language Teaching

Shifting focus to Communicative Competence (CC) in FLT is traced back to the 1960s. The development of CC and related competence in FLT was an inevitable counteraction to the inadequacy of limiting FLT to the learning of language structure. In fact, this shift was influenced by the growing economic and cultural exchanges in Europe that require interacting with people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Atamna, 2008) (*see section 1.2.1 for detailed explanation*). Nunan (1991) said that the communicative approach emphasized using language effectively in various social contexts. Initially, the teaching of culture in EFL contexts was limited to literary texts.

In reaction to its narrow use, Dodge (1972) proposed enlarging culture teaching in EFL programmes. Accordingly, he (1972) introduced methods like cultural capsule and mini drama. By the late 1980s and 1990s and due to the rapid technological innovation and the proliferation of globalisation, equipping learners with information about the Target Culture (TC) was not enough for an effective intercultural communication. Therefore, a holistic approach that would promote an intercultural awareness and competence was highly required. Stern (1983) noted that language teaching shift has reflected changes in societal roles and into intercultural trends.

1.2. Intercultural Communicative Competence: Emergence and Definitions

Literature on ICC is grounded in interdisciplinary research fields including anthropology, ethnography, sociology, and recently applied linguistics. Given this interdisciplinarity, this section seeks to pedagogically conceptualise ICC within the context of FL education. This, in fact, requires an examination of the emergence of the concept and an exploration of its evolving definitions.

1.2.1. From Communicative Competence to Intercultural Communicative Competence

Tracing the growth of ICC is inserted in this chapter for the purpose of highlighting the limitations of the communicative approach which will in turn provide context for the

perspectives that are adopted in the current research. To start with, the term competence was originally introduced by Chomsky (1965) alongside with performance. For Chomsky (1965), competence refers to the speaker's/hearer's unconscious knowledge of language while performance is the actual use of language in concrete situations. Despite the fact that Chomsky was the first to coin the term competence in the realms of language teaching and learning, renowned theorists in the field such as Candlin (1978), Gumperz (1982), Habermas (1970), Hymes (1971), Savignon (1983), and Widdowson (1984) criticized Chomsky's narrow-scoped perspective and expanded the use of competence to reflect on the social context of the language in use (as cited in Atamna, 2008).

In reaction to Chomsky's inadequate demarcation of competence and performance, the American linguist and anthropologist Dell Hymes (1966) introduced CC to equally accredit the grammatical knowledge of the language and the ability to use it appropriately within a given social and cultural context. In this respect, Hymes (1966) claimed that "the consequences of the relativity of the structure of language depend on the relativity of the function of language" (p. 116). In the same vein, Hymes (1971) posited that Chomsky magnified the abstract rules of use and, thus, overlooked the significance of the social context of language.

Instead, Hymes (1972) enlarged Chomsky's linguistic competence to incorporate a larger theory that accounts for culture and communication. Following this argument, Hymes (1972) confirmed that the socio-linguistic aspect of language is highly required for a speaker to become competent. He (1972) further noted that language learners may acquire the linguistic features of language but still fail to communicate appropriately and effectively. Hymes' (1972) opposition to Chomsky's focus on competence over performance has been embraced and elaborated by several theorists. Matthews (2014) noted that the Chomskyan concept of linguistic competence needs an ideal situation in which a hearer-speaker produces and understands grammatically correct sentences.

Similarly, Halliday (1979) presented a critique to Chomsky's abstract approach to language that highlighted the need to study languages with consideration to its social and functional aspects. For him (1979), language is a social semiotic system where meanings are derived from its use in a social context. As such, he (1979) developed Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) opposing Chomsky's generative grammar and emphasized the functional use of language and how it fulfils various functions. Celce-Murcia (1995) extended these views by introducing the interactional competence; it emphasizes negotiation of meanings in social contexts. These critiques and views that emerged as a reaction to Chomsky's linguistic theory in one form or another viewed CC as the ability to effectively use language across diverse social and cultural settings. This, in fact, reflects ongoing refinement and application in language education.

Within the CC literature, the Canale and Swain Model (1980) is considered as the most acknowledged model. It emphasized the value of language production (speaking and writing) in language learning, asserting that producing language stimulates cognitive processes that in turn foster better understanding and internationalization (Shrum & Glisan, 2016). CC has also been questioned for its compliance to native speakers' norms with consideration to the native language culture only. Fantini (2005) contended that conventional models of CC, which is based on native speaker-centric paradigms (accounting native speaker's social background), fail to capture the dynamic nature of intercultural communication. Using English as a lingua franca in cross cultural settings necessitates the incorporation of the intercultural dimension in FL teaching and learning contexts. As a result, ICC was introduced.

Despite the fact that the communicative approach accounts for the importance of interaction in real life situations since it sets the CC at the heart of language teaching and learning, it fails to address the new role of English as a lingua franca in response to globalisation. Therefore, a shift from CC to ICC is inevitable (Fantini, 2005).

Shifting from CC to ICC aligns the multicultural value of FL education and cultivates effective communication among people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Therefore, adopting an intercultural approach to FL learning and teaching, which values both the TC and the source culture, provides a robust framework for integrating the intercultural dimension and thus develops learners' ICC. Byram (1997) argued that intercultural education should evolve beyond the native-speaker's norms and revalue the importance of the source culture.

1.2.2. Conceptualising Intercultural Communicative Competence

ICC is a prevailing term among a wide range of terms like global competence, transcultural communication, intercultural sensitivity that they all refer to an individual's ability to function effectively in an intercultural setting (Fantini, 2006, as cited in Huang, 2021). Despite its dominance and wide use, the term ICC has “become inflated with everyone using it for their own particular purposes” (Frederiksen et al, 2000, p.2). That's why there is no consensus over providing a straightforward definition of the term. As such, we (the researcher) limited its scope to the field of FLT.

Renowned scholars like Byram (1997), Chen and Starosta (1998) have made salient efforts for decades to provide a functional conceptualisation of ICC that has been approved in language teaching and learning. Byram (2000) defined ICC as “the ability to interact effectively with people of cultures other than one's own” (p.297). Byram has never advocated that being intercultural necessitates changing identity but rather eliminating boundaries to view others' cultures from their perspectives (Inkaew, 2016). Similarly, Chen and Starosta (1998) defined ICC as the ability to effectively and appropriately enact behaviours that are related to different cultures in an intercultural environment (as cited in Penbek, Yundakul & Cerit, 2009). In a nutshell, developing an ICC requires an effective interaction with people from different cultures **beside** one's own culture.

As mentioned in the previous section (*section 1.2.1*), ICC is an extension of CC. In an attempt to define ICC, Fitzgerald (1993) stated that “communication lies at the heart of intercultural and interpersonal relations. If we wish to become better at communication, we must acquire new competences, skills and implications, which involve new ways of looking at ourselves and others” (quoted in Beneke, 2000, p.108). Thus, ICC needs to be tackled from a communicative perspective.

In approaching ICC, one of the main areas that has raised scrutiny among scholars is whether they view ICC from an end-goal perspective or from a process perspective. In this scope, Taylor (1994) posited that ICC is not an output but rather a constant transformational process in which a person gradually develops an ability to become interculturally competent (as cited in Bahlai, et al., 2019). This idea was later supported by Byram’s and Deardorff’s views of ICC that will be discussed in the coming section (*section 1.3. Models of ICC*).

Barrett et al. (2013) suggested an interesting vision of ICC that conforms to the field of FLT. They (2013) referred to ICC as the sum of attitudes, knowledge, understanding, and skills which enable an individual or a group of people to interact appropriately with people from multiple cultural affiliations. Fantini (1997) added that ICC is based on understanding and tolerating intercultural differences and that barriers between cultures should be discouraged.

Fantini (2012) noted that despite the fact that there are innumerable attempts to define ICC, most generated definitions are more likely to be explanatory and procedural rather than scrupulous. He (2012) posited that these definitions focused on different aspects including knowledge, attitudes, and sensitivity, and sometimes discrediting others (as cited in Inkaew, 2016).

While reviewing the literature, there are more definitions as far as ICC is concerned, but they mostly share no more of the abovementioned concepts. Once familiar with the term, it becomes necessary to explore models that emphasize the components of ICC and the

frameworks that are vital in developing practical teaching and assessment frameworks for our present study.

1.3. Models of Intercultural Communicative Competence

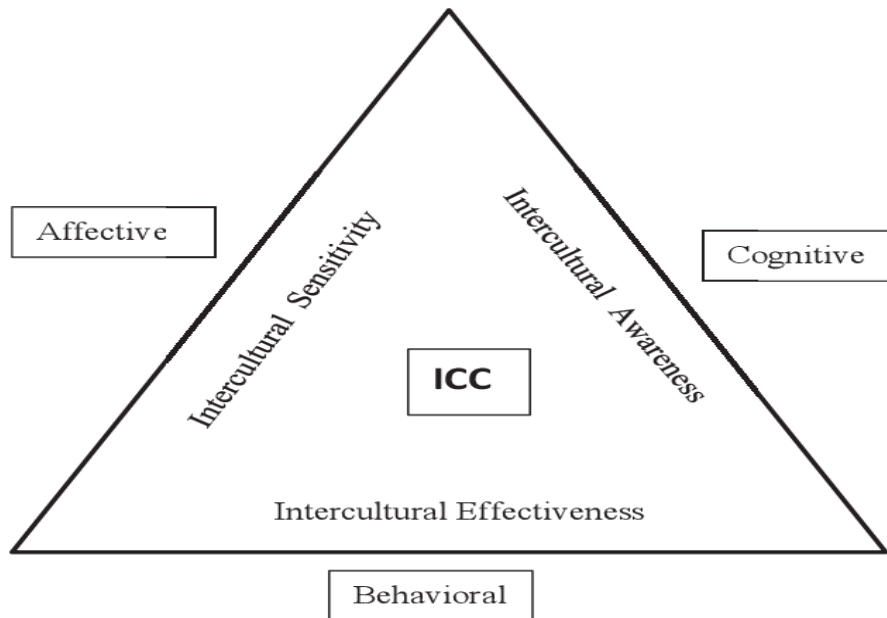
A variety of models have been developed by researchers and scholars in the field of language education to conceptualize ICC. The most influential models have been proposed by Chen and Starosta (1996), Byram (1997), Bennett (1998), and Deardorff (2004); each emphasizing different aspects and components that are vital for an effective intercultural communication.

1.3.1. Chen and Starosta's Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence (1996)

The Chen and Starosta's (1996) model of intercultural competence aims at developing a comprehensive framework that targets an effective communication across different cultures. This model is structured around three partial constructs: Intercultural Sensitivity, Intercultural Awareness, and Intercultural Adroitness (Chen & Starosta, 2000). Each line of the triangle represents a component of intercultural competence (figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1

Chen and Starosta's Model of ICC (Chen and Starosta, 2000)



Note. Chen and Starosta, 2000

The concept of Intercultural Sensitivity is clarified via the affective component of intercultural competence. The model of Intercultural Sensitivity refers to a person's ability to exchange positive emotions within an intercultural interaction. This implies an understanding and a respect of cultural variations (Chen & Starosta, 1996, as cited in Fritz et al., 2005). In this vein, Chen and Starosta (1996) noted that Intercultural Sensitivity is based on open-mindedness, self-concept, self-relaxation and non-judgemental attitudes. They (2000) further developed a scale (Intercultural Sensitivity Scale) which is the only scientific survey conducted to date for assessing the emotional dimension of intercultural competence.

Intercultural Awareness is a reflection of the cognitive component of intercultural competence. This construct is described as a person's ability to comprehend and explain other cultures. Intercultural Awareness is subdivided into self-awareness and cultural awareness (Chen & Starosta, 1996, as cited in Fritz et al., 2005). Similar to the Intercultural Sensitive

Scale, an Intercultural Awareness Scale has been developed by Chen and Starosta (1997) to assess the cognitive dimension of the Intercultural Competence.

Intercultural Adroitness represents the behavioural component of intercultural competence. It refers to an individual's ability to achieve communication goals within an intercultural interaction. This dimension is composed of four components, namely "message skills, appropriate self-disclosure, behavioural flexibility, and interaction management." (Chen & Starosta, 1996, p.364).

Based on this conceptual model, a replication study that was carried out in Germany and USA generates doubts about the validity and transferability of Chen and Starosta's model (Fritz et al., 2005). Another Taiwanese study proved that the model did not fit in many cultural contexts including the Taiwanese context (Wu, 2015). In the field of FLT, the Chen-Starosta Model shows the minutest validity except for some researchers' personal attempts to adjust the model.

1.3.2. Byram's Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence (1997)

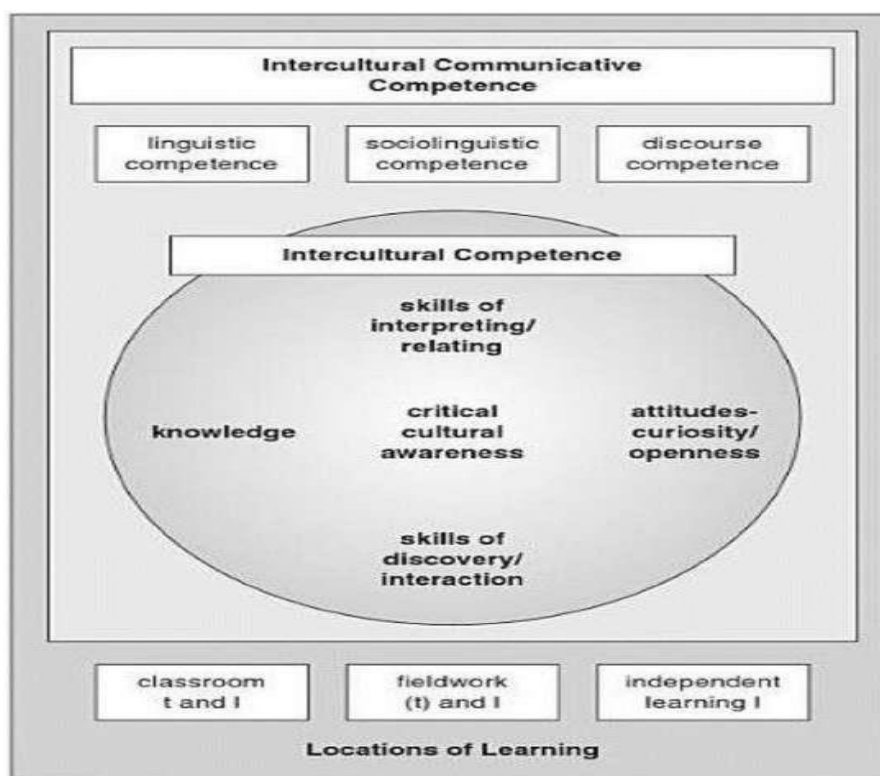
Byram's model of ICC is a framework that was developed by Michael Byram in 1997 and grounded in his research on language education and intercultural learning. Byram's model is not only the highly cited among ICC models but also the most workable in FLT. The reason behind acknowledging Byram's model as a cornerstone in cultural studies and FLT is mainly due to its accessibility to teachers who find no complexities in implementing this model either in teaching or assessment. Most importantly, Byram's model is a content-free model that is flexible and can be adjusted to work within specific situations (Byram, 1997).

Byram's model of ICC enfolds four competencies, namely: Linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and intercultural competence (Byram, 1997). Byram (1997) further divided the intercultural competence into five constituents, commonly referred to as *savoirs* (as cited in Corbett, 2003). These five *savoirs* are attitudes,

knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, and critical cultural awareness (Byram, 1997) (Figure 1.2). Both attitudes and knowledge factors are preconditions for the intercultural interaction while the two mentioned skills are required aptitudes (Byram et al., 2002). These aspects of interaction can be acquired through experience or within the context of formal education (Byram, 1997).

Figure 1.2

Byram's Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence



Note. Byram, 1997, p. 73

1.3.2.1. Intercultural Attitudes (*Savoir-être*)

Attitudes were narrowed by Byram to refer to individuals' attitudes toward those who are culturally different from them (Byram, 1997). As such, attitudes that are described as prejudice and stereotype create unsuccessful intercultural interaction (Allport, 1979, as cited in Byram, 1997). Stating this, in fact, does not imply that positive attitudes are encouraged as they, in themselves, hinder mutual understanding. The kind of attitudes that Byram encouraged

are “attitudes of curiosity and openness, attitudes of readiness to suspend disbelief and judgement about other cultures, and about one’s own culture” (Byram, 1997, p. 34). Maintaining these attitudes minimizes biased interaction and facilitates operating the intercultural skills.

1.3.2.2. Knowledge (Savoir)

The knowledge that is brought by individuals to an interaction is broadly categorized by Byram into (a) knowledge of one’s own culture and of other cultures, and (b) knowledge of the interactional processes at individual and societal level. The first category is acquired within the process of socialization; whether it is formal (education) or informal socialization. This entails an understanding of social groups and their practices and products. The second category of knowledge implies an understanding of the norms that guide interaction, awareness of nonverbal communication that varies from one culture to the other, and awareness of historical and cultural context (Byram, 1997).

1.3.2.3. Skills of Interpreting and Relating (Savoir Comprendre)

By consciously applying the acquired knowledge of one’s own culture and others’ culture, individuals can effectively operate skills of interpreting and relating. Accordingly, these skills permit individuals to interpret a document or an event from another culture as well as identify the relationships of documents and events from different cultures. The interpretation of one’s own documents in relation to others’ documents implies addressing encountered dysfunctions and contradictions by resolving them or identifying some as unresolvable (Byram, 1997).

1.3.2.4. Skills of Discovery and Interaction (Savoir Apprendre/Faire)

In Byram’s model of ICC, the skills of discovery and interaction are vital in acquiring new knowledge about other cultures and applying the acquired knowledge, attitudes and skills in a real-time communication (Byram,1997). The Skills of discovery involve the willingness

to acquire and analyse cultural information so that individuals can easily adapt to unfamiliar cultural norms and practices. Meanwhile, the Skills of interaction refer to the individual's ability to communicate effectively in an intercultural setting with respect of differences (Byram, 1997).

1.3.2.5. Critical Cultural Awareness (Savoir S'engager)

It is the ability to critically evaluate the perspectives, practices, and products in one's own and other cultures. Byram (2012) noted that critical cultural awareness embodies the educational dimension of language teaching, and that skills, attitudes, and knowledge should be directed towards developing critical cultural awareness.

Michael Byram's model of ICC has had a profound impact on educational theory and practice especially in the field of language education. Byram's model intended to provide a thorough yet accessible model by means of which language teachers can effectively approach intercultural learning (McCoachy et al., 2022). MacCoachy et al. (2022) added that focusing on the interactive and interpretive nature of intercultural competence is the major attribute of Byram's model.

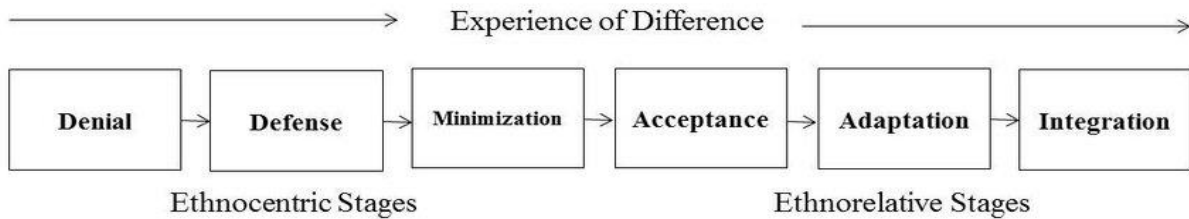
1.3.3. Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)

Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) was created by Milton J. Bennett in 1993 as the outcome of years of experience during which he (1993) observed individuals' characteristics in intercultural contexts and their reactions to cultural differences (Deardorff, 2009). This model is based on the view that the more individuals experience cultural differences, the more their intercultural competences are enhanced (Hammer et al., 2003). On this ground, those who live in a culturally homogeneous environment have one worldview; subsequently, they are not able to interpret cultural aspects that are different from theirs. Bennett (1993) referred to those experiences as "cultural worldview" (as cited in Izmaylova et al., 2017). In describing the move from ethnocentrism to

ethnorelativism, Bennett (1993) identified six stages as shown in the following figure (figure 1.3).

Figure 1.3

Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Bennett, 1993)



Note. Bennett, 1993

Ethnocentrism is based on the assumption that “the worldview of one’s own culture is central to all reality” (Bennett, 1993, p.30). In other words, individuals at this stage assume that their native culture is the center of the worldview and they, therefore, deny that any other worldview exists. Ethnocentrism is subdivided into three main stages: Denial of difference, defence against difference, and minimization of difference.

1.3.3.1. Denial

It is rooted in the idea that individuals tend to ignore the reality of diversity. As he described people at this stage, Bennett (2004) noted:

They are unable to experience differences in other than extremely simple ways. They may be perplexed when asked about their own culture, because they have not considered how culture impacts their own or others’ lives. They might ask well-meant but naive questions about other cultures (“do they have television in Japan?”) and make superficial statements of tolerance (“live and let live”). In some cases, people with this orientation may dehumanize others, assuming that different behavior is a deficiency in intelligence or personality. (p. 1)

As stated, people at this stage experience confusion when they are asked about their local culture. Besides, they tend to maintain stereotypic knowledge about other cultures. Relatedly, Bennett (2004) further noted that denial can be based on (a) isolation where there is little or no chance to experience differences as it can be based on (b) separation where isolation is intentional. This latter includes the instance of a group of people who sets barriers not to confront differences so as to protect their worldview.

1.3.3.2. Defence

Climbing the scale, the defence stage is characterised by a recognition of cultural differences that is coupled by a negative evaluation of those whose cultures are different. Bennett (2004) explained them as follows:

They feel ‘under siege’ by people that they stereotype in simplistic and negative ways, protecting themselves with a hardened boundary between themselves and the ‘others.’ Typically, one’s own culture is exalted, and other cultures are denigrated with negative stereotypes. This hierarchical view of culture may lead people to assume a kind of social Darwinism wherein they place their own culture at the acme of development and civilization. (p. 3)

Three areas of defence are typically found: (a) Denigration implies belittling or actively discriminating culturally-distinct group. Besides, (b) superiority which is based on exaggerating the positive aspects of one’s own culture. This is aligned with considering any other cultural trait as inferior and as a threat. (c) Reversal is when people experiencing it consider other cultures as superior, and denigrate theirs: As Bennett (2004) put it “going native’ among long-term sojourners or the ‘false ally’ among some dominant-culture seekers of minority approval” (p. 3).

1.3.3.3. Minimization

People who have reached the minimization stage experience a low recognition of differences. Despite the fact that the individual is aware of the differences between cultures, his/her views towards them are minimized (Bennett, 2004). Bennett (2004) viewed minimization as an awareness of the worldviews with disregard of cultural differences. This implies similarity between cultures in basic values since only existing differences are those observable superficial practices.

Movement into the **ethnorelative** stages represents a significant change in one's view of difference from avoidance to confrontation. At this stage difference is no longer perceived as a threat but as a challenge. Ethnorelativism is divided into three stages: Acceptance of difference, adaptation of difference, and integration of difference.

1.3.3.4. Acceptance

To start with, acceptance occurs when people recognize that differences in terms of both people's beliefs and values are the essence of culture and that those differences are to be accepted and appreciated. Acceptance does not necessarily mean agreement with or attempting to adopt with differences (Hammer et al., 2003).

1.3.3.5. Adaptation

In the stage of adaptation, people start to perceive cultural categories as more flexible and become more competent to communicate in an intercultural context. It is based on the assumption that individuals adopt some cultural aspects from the target culture and thus can change their behaviours to effectively interact with people from a culturally distinct group (Bennett, 2004). It is at this stage that people become bicultural or multicultural.

1.3.3.6. Integration

Integration is the final stage in Bennett's DMIS wherein individuals integrate aspects from different cultures and incorporate them to their native culture. By this, they can be

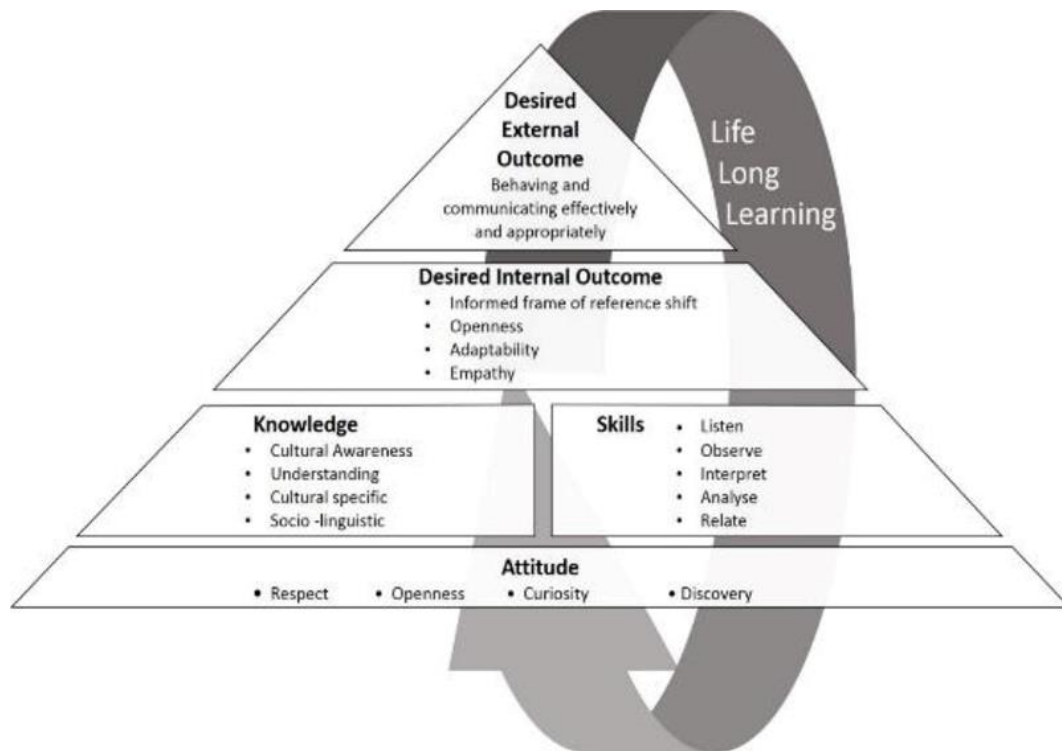
mediators between two or more cultures. Bennett (2004) provided a straightforward description to this experience as “a person who is not defined in terms of any one culture –typically a person who is bicultural or multicultural,” (p. 11). This experience encompasses (a) Constructive Marginality and (b) Ethical Commitment. The former refers to maintaining cultural identity besides being open to other cultures while the latter describes constructing an ethical system that allows for “commitment in relativism” (Bennett, 2004, p. 11).

1.3.4. Deardorff’s Model of Intercultural Competence

Before exploring Deardorff’s Model of Intercultural Competence, it is worth noting that Darla Deardorff (2006) conducted a large-scaled study that involved a sample of 23 intercultural experts. This expansive study synthesized the widely accepted definitions and components of ICC. By this token, Deardorff (2006) conceptualised her findings into two visual models: The Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence, and the Process Model. As suggested by Deardorff (2006), the Pyramid Model encompasses attitudes, knowledge, internal outcomes, and external outcomes; each lower level of the pyramid enhances the upper level (Figure 1.4) (Deardorff, 2006, as cited in Deardorff, 2009).

Figure 1.4

Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence (Deardorff, 2006)



Note. Deardorff, 2006

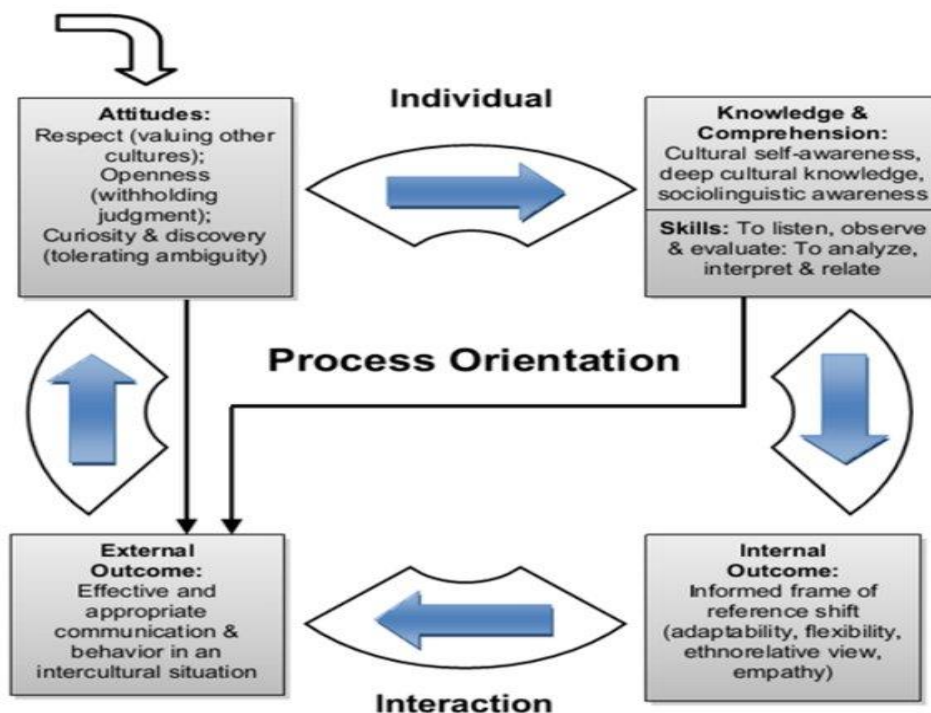
As displayed in the above figure 1.4, attitudes are laid at the base of the pyramid to cover attitudes of respect, openness, curiosity, and discovery. These attitudes are prerequisite to acquire knowledge and operate skills that appear at the second level of the pyramid. Attitudes alongside knowledge and skills collectively produce internal and external outcomes that describe the recursive value of competence. For an individual to be interculturally competent, a progress from personal level to interactive level to acquire the overall components is highly required (Deardorff, 2006, as cited in Deardorff, 2009).

As its name suggests, the Process Model emphasized continuous learning in the course of developing an ICC. Accordingly, intercultural competence is not a static trait but a process that develops with time. In simpler terms, intercultural learning according to Deardorff (2006) is a lifelong process. Similar to Byram's model of ICC, Deardorff's Process Model is widely

used in FLT to guide language learners in enhancing their ability to effectively communicate in an intercultural setting (Deardorff, 2006, as cited in Deardorff, 2009).

Figure 1.5

Process Model of Intercultural Competence



Note. Deardorff, 2006

Reflecting on the above, several models have been proposed to address the development of ICC and outlined the essential components of ICC. Despite the fact that the mentioned models (Bennett 1986; Byram, 1997; Chen & Starosta, 1996; Deardorff, 2006) are differently framed, they agreed upon essential items mainly the intercultural knowledge, attitudes, and skills.

1.4. The Intercultural Speaker's Guide to Intercultural Competence

The concept of an intercultural speaker is considered the leading construct within ICC theory and practice since the mid-1990s. The term was introduced in line with the emerging shift in FL education toward replacing the evasive idea of “native speaker” with the dynamic concept of “the intercultural speaker” (Jackson, 2010).

1.4.1. The Intercultural Speaker

In the course of exploring the current body of literature on intercultural learning, the concept of the intercultural speaker is prominently featured across various works and is notably significant. The concept was primarily coined by Michael Byram in the mid-1990s and later adopted by many scholars. In the general run of things, Skopinskaja (2009) defined the intercultural speaker as a person who is able to communicate with people from different cultures and accepts their viewpoints. House (2007) defined an intercultural speaker as a person who has managed to settle for the in-between; that is to say, an individual who can perform in both his/her native culture and in another one that is acquired later.

Viewing language learners as intercultural speakers replaces the ideal native speaker's concept that sets at the heart of Chomsky's linguistic competence (Davies, 2004). The shift towards the intercultural speaker is harmonized with the new language goals to replace the obsessive desire to achieve the so-called native speakers' competence in FL. Thus, learners are required not only to be linguistically competent but to also be interculturally competent. Put it differently, the intercultural speaker is not bound to a specific culture but rather s/he interacts and mediates across multiple borders (Wilkinson, 2013).

As mentioned before, the shift towards intercultural speaker status has opposed the traditional obsession of achieving an ideal native-speaker. Unlike the condition where learners find themselves in an obligation to pretend to be native, the idea of an intercultural speaker has emerged as a more realistic image of a language learner in which s/he effectively interacts with others from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Byram & Risager, 1999, as cited in Wilkinson, 2013).

The concept of the intercultural speaker is introduced alongside with Byram's earlier conceptualisation of ICC. Byram (1989) argued that FL education is associated with the process of "tertiary socialization" (p.5). Risager (2006) and Roberts, et al. (2001) reinforced Byram's

interpretation by noting that for language learners to build intercultural skills, they need to interact and communicate across cultural boundaries. Therefore, they proposed the third stage of socialization in which learners are educated to act interculturally (as cited in Wilkinson, 2013).

Byram (2008) paraphrased the concept of the intercultural speaker or the intercultural competent speaker to “intercultural mediator”. However, he (2008) still emphasized the idea of a speaker who holds oral language skills, some linguistic competence that would enable him/her to mediate cultural variations. His views have never totally denied the importance of linguistic competence; he rather opposed limiting language education to the acquisition of this linguistic competence. It is worth noting that an intercultural speaker or mediator is one who is able to communicate and negotiate between multiple cultures and not specific cultures (Byram & Fleming, 1998). That is to say, an intercultural speaker develops an ability to thrive in multiple situations.

Similarly, Kramsch (1998b) opposed the progression of language education towards ideal native speakers. She (1998b) posited that an intercultural competent speaker interacts and communicates across different languages and cultures. She (1998b) stated that an intercultural mediator is a “broker between cultures of all kinds” (as cited in Wilkinson, 2013, p. 298). Building on Byram’s conception, Kramsch (1998b) elaborated two main areas: Multilingual settings and multicultural settings. In such diverse environments, distinguishing between native and non-native speakers should not be tolerated. In this scope, Kramsch (1998b) brought a new concept, which is called “the symbolic competence”. This refers to the speakers’ ability to choose the appropriate language that is the most advantageous to the situation. Kramsch and Whiteside (2008) suggested that embedding the symbolic competence in the idea of the intercultural speaker enables students to navigate both linguistic and cultural boundaries (as cited in Wilkinson, 2013).

Based on Byram's "intercultural speaker/mediator" and Kramsch's "broker between cultures", Jordan, (2002), suggested the third space as the space of the intercultural speaker. She (2002) believed that cultural translation creates this third place. For successful communication and interaction, Jordan (2002) argued that this third place is not only a middle ground between cultures but also a setting for intercultural engagement. Thus, for her (2002), an intercultural speaker that she refers to as cultural translator holds an ability to bridge cultural divides.

1.4.2. Acquiring Global Competence

The intercultural speaker should be equipped with the intercultural or the global competence. This idea of intercultural competence is discussed previously, but this time is more aligned towards "how", and "to what" degree such competence can be acquired by an intercultural speaker. Byram (2008) and Kramsch (1998b) noted that acquiring an intercultural competence is not slowly associated with the learnt knowledge of the TC. It is rather equated with the skills that would enable individuals to effectively communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds (Byram & Fleming, 1998).

Risager (2006) argued that in an era of globalisation, language students should be prepared for these global flows that are reinforced by the elimination of nations' cultural boundaries. The aim of language education has accordingly shifted toward developing a global competence for intercultural speakers. Jordan (2002) believed that even if language learners may not have an opportunity to travel abroad and meet people from different cultural backgrounds, the plethora of channels of communication that are available via the web exposed learners to an intercultural environment. She (2002) added that an intercultural speaker should acquire the necessary skills to effectively operate in globalised intercultural environment.

The acquisition of intercultural competence is, therefore, recommended to integrate the teaching of the intercultural dimension into language education so as to enhance students'

understanding and appreciation of both language and culture (Byram, 2008). Adopting an anthropological perspective on language education which includes all cultural aspects (not just literature) can further improve intercultural competence. This approach encourages using methods like discourse analysis and ethnography to connect language learning with real life cultural experiences (Robert, et al., 2001). This approach supports the broader aim of language education to contribute to cultural and linguistic globalisation.

1.5. Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence

This section is intentionally included in the literature because ICC domains and models of assessment are vital in measuring EFL learners' ICC proficiency. Particularly, reviewing and analysing ICC models of assessment is essential for the researcher to adopt one for the research purposes. Before delving into these areas, one should mention that intercultural tasks are usually related to an evaluation or assessment in EFL education. In this scope, Barrett and his colleagues (2013) found it necessary to distinguish between assessment and evaluation. The former refers to measuring the effectiveness of a lesson or a programme of study that aims at developing learners' ICC, while the later implies the measurement of the degree of learners' ICC proficiency (Barrett et al., 2013). Therefore, in this study, the term "assessment" is to be used accordingly to mean the degree of learners' ICC proficiency.

1.5.1. Intercultural Communicative Competence Domains for Assessment

As mentioned in prior sections, ICC is not an all-encompassing concept as it addresses more than one aspect. Therefore, exploring the ICC domains are required to guideline the process of assessment. Based on Byram's model of ICC, Lussier (2007) identified three domains for assessment namely: Intercultural knowledge, intercultural skills, and intercultural attitudes.

Concerning the assessment of the intercultural knowledge, Lussier (2007) suggested that the most appropriate tool for assessing intercultural knowledge is the "pen and paper". In

this scope, respondents are asked to answer direct questions or multiple-choice questions. He (2007) added that these questions are designed to assess learners' abilities to identify cultural variations based on an intercultural event. In simpler terms, assessing intercultural knowledge targets cultural facts about similarities and differences between the TC and the source culture.

Assessment of the intercultural skills is oriented towards measuring students' ability to appropriately and affectively interact in the target language. As such, students need to go beyond the linguistic and communicative competence to interculturally interact according to the different cultural contexts. This, in fact, implies that language students are required to demonstrate a practical ability to appropriately use language, and adjust their behaviours accordingly to harmonize with the intercultural milieu (Lussier, 2007).

It is noteworthy that assessment of attitudes has not been widely considered and, thus, assessing respondents' attitudes is mainly measured through self-reflection tools. In this scope, some key elements are accordingly assessed including attitudes, motivations, critical cultural awareness, openness, and reflective engagement. However, more focus has shifted to assessing cultural awareness which highlights the understanding of differences and similarities between cultures (Lussier, 2007).

Another closely related identification of ICC domains of assessment was proposed by Barrett and his colleagues (2013). For them (2013), the intercultural competence dimensions that need to be assessed are attitudes, knowledge, skills, and actions. The attitudes domain includes valuing pluralism and cultural variations of views and practices. Additionally, ICC domains included an understanding of the internal diversity and heterogeneity of different cultural groups. Pertaining to the intercultural skills, one requires to develop the ability to interpret other cultural practices, beliefs, and values, and to relate them to one's own culture. Within the domain of actions, individuals are needed to capitalize opportunities that help them interact with people from different cultural orientations (Barrett et al., 2013).

Providing learners with feedbacks on these three domains would develop their abilities to interact and communicate appropriately and respectfully with people who have different cultural norms and practices (Inkaew, 2016). The domains that Barrett and his colleagues (2013) identified bear substantial resemblance to Lussier's (2007) domains in addition to the action domain that wholly accumulates the ICC aspects.

1.5.2. Models of ICC Assessment

There are different models for assessing ICC. Each of these models has a different perspective on how to assess individuals' abilities and skills in communicating across cultures. For the aim of deciding on a model for this research at the stage of assessing learners' ICC, some well-known models are explored and reviewed in the next titles.

1.5.2.1. Barrett's Intercultural Competence Assessment Model

Barrett's Intercultural Competence Assessment Model highlights five key components. The latter are: cultural awareness, cultural knowledge, interpersonal skills, behavioural adaptation, and critical reflection (Barrett et al., 2013).

To start with, cultural awareness focuses on understanding how one's own culture impacts interactions and personal predisposition. Being informed about different cultural norms and practices is embedded in the concept of cultural knowledge. Interpersonal skills can be assessed through a thorough examination of learners' abilities to empathize cultural difference and adapt their communication style to the different cultural contexts. Adapting one's behaviour is central to the interpersonal skills; behavioural adaptation entails individuals' ability to refine their behaviour to cultural norms. A final key component of this model is critical reflection that promotes ongoing evaluation and learning from the interaction with others (Inkaew, 2016). Barrett's model is applied in educational settings and in workplace training.

To assess these competences, Barrett and his colleagues (2013) proposed tests that can work for both formative and summative evaluation. The major used type of tests is associated with texts that generally represent an intercultural event. Other assessment tools include portfolios, diaries, and self/peer-assessment (Barrett et al., 2013).

1.5.2.2. Byram's Intercultural Competence Assessment Model

As mentioned in previous sections, Byram's ICC model elaborates on five dimensions of intercultural competence that are commonly known as *Savoirs*. According to the model, these dimensions are: knowledge (*Savoirs*), skills of interpreting and relating (*Savoir Comprendre*), skills of discovery and interaction (*Savoir Apprendre/Faire*), attitudes (*Savoir Être*), and critical cultural awareness (*Savoir S'engager*). In line with this model, Byram (1997) developed an assessment model to assess those five 'Savoirs', or competences.

Byram (1997) further argued that both Chomsky's competence and Hymes' performance were not satisfactory in terms of fostering effective communication in FL education. As a response, Byram (1997) introduced the term "*Savoir*" to all-encompassingly integrate attitudes, knowledge, and skills. By defining clear objectives for each competence, Byram (1997) established assessment tools that best align with the outlined objectives. For him (1997), setting clear objectives is highly required for assessing ICC. Assessment should, therefore, measure what objectives intent to realise (Byram, 1997).

1.5.2.3. Brighton's Intercultural Assessment Model

Dr. Christopher Brighton (2011) noted that there is a lack of practical guidelines that would help assess individuals' ICC proficiency and that the existing models did not provide detailed frameworks that can be practical. Brighton (2011) recommended the use of Self Awareness Inventories (SAI) and Self Reflection Journals/Blogs. These tools are designed to help individuals self-evaluate their skills and abilities in intercultural interactions.

The SAI targets self-perception of intercultural competences and is generally implemented in education to develop learners' ability to interact across cultures. Originally, Dr. Michael Paige developed the SAI in 2003 to incorporate two categories; Organizational Assessment and Development, and Personal Assessment and Development. This latter includes index, portfolios, and surveys that are used to measure individuals' ICC. The SAI are amongst the most well-known and the most frequently applied assessment tools (Brighton, 2011).

1.5.2.4. Fantini's Assessment of Intercultural Competence

The Assessment of Intercultural Competence (AIC) was originally introduced by the Federation of the Experiment in International Living (FEIL) to gauge how intercultural sojourners change over time. The AIC instrument was created to assess the intercultural outcomes of the FEIL programmes. This model addresses the core components of ICC: Knowledge, attitudes, skills, and critical awareness. AIC applies self and other-reported instruments beside interview and surveys (Fantini, 2006, as cited in Garrett-Rucks, 2018).

1.5.2.5. The Intercultural Development Inventory Model (Hammer, Bennett and Wiseman)

Bennett (1993) created the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) as a framework to explain his long-term direct observations of people's behaviours and experiences in intercultural settings like cultural workshops, classes, and exchanges. Based on the findings in the field of cognitive psychology and constructivism, Bennett (1993) categorized the observed behaviour into six stages (*as discussed in section 1.3.3*) (Garrett-Rucks, 2014).

Included in DMIS, Intercultural Development Inventory was created by Bennett and his colleagues to assess individuals' intercultural sensitivity and development. As defined, the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) is an assessment programme that measures individuals' ability to appropriately interact with people from different cultures and adapt their

behaviours accordingly (Bennett, 1993). The IDI programme can be applied through online formats or paper-and-pencil formats (Inkaew, 2016).

IDI offered the strategy for assessing ICC. In this scope, defining straightforward objectives for ICC is the procedural strategy that was offered by this approach. The constructed assessment instruments that were applicable to this study in terms of intended ICC domains are mainly questionnaires and Likert scale to reflect respondents' perceptions towards ICC related issues (Zhou & Griffiths, 2011). Particularly, IDI consists of 50 self-assessment items with five points Likert scales. This model has been originally used to assess the intercultural competence of high school learners, university students, and intercultural trainees (Straffon, 2003). Based on their responses to the Likert items, participants receive feedback that is intended to develop their strategies toward intercultural competence cultivation. It is claimed that more than 70 Ph.D. dissertations had been approached using the IDI as an ICC assessment tool (Straffon, 2003).

Despite the fact that this model has been acknowledged by many researchers as an effective IC assessment model, Garrett-Rucks (2014) noted that applying IDI is expensive for some researchers. She (2014) added that in spite of conducting a quantitative methodology in assessing individuals' intercultural development, Bennett and his colleagues failed to seize individual's differences that qualitative research, like the one of Byram, account for (Garrett-Rucks, 2014). Garrett-Rucks' study is one of much research that put Byram's IC model and Bennett's IDI model into comparison to reveal the discrepancies. Most of these studies, in fact, favoured Byram's approach (Garrett-Rucks, 2014)

1.6. An Integrative Approach to ICC in EFL Education

As the intercultural dynamics of globalisation commandeer how people interact on a global scale, organizations and institutions recognize the need to cultivate ICC. Within the context of EFL education, European countries were among the first to pioneer the

implementation of ICC in their educational system. In this regard, a broader educational trend has expanded across the world, mostly shaped by foundations like the CEFR and the CoE curricula (Komorowska, 2006). These frameworks accentuate the necessity of embedding intercultural competence at the core of their educational systems to foster learners' openness and tolerance towards cultural diversity. Despite that, the integration of ICC into language curricula and syllabi presents complex challenges due to its multifaceted nature (Komorowska, 2006).

In practice, EFL syllabi in Algeria have often focused on cultural facts that are traditionally delivered through receptive skills, particularly listening and reading without accounting for the development of learners' ICC in speaking and writing (Atamna, 2008). To cover this gap, an integrative approach to curriculum and syllabus design is highly required. As such, curriculum and syllabus design must address the embodiment of ICC in EFL teaching and learning through incorporating the intercultural dimension (Mizab, 2020). Within an intercultural-driven curriculum, syllabus designers are required to consider enriching the repertoire of cross-cultural activities (Boualli, 2025). In fact, an intercultural-based syllabus offers a comprehensive framework for teachers to design their own materials for the language classroom (Komorowska, 2006).

1.6.1. Curriculum Internationalisation

The Internationalisation at Home (IoC) is a subset of Internationalisation of Higher Education (IoHE). The former denotes incorporating international and intercultural dimensions into the curriculum within the home institution (Leask, 2009). In simpler terms, the concept refers to incorporating the intercultural dimension into the curriculum, the syllabus, the teaching and learning processes, and support services of a programme of study. An internationalised curriculum is designed to develop learners' intercultural perspectives as global professionals and citizens (Leask, 2009). Leask (2014) clarified that such curriculum

does not only focus on “the mobile few” but on the learning outcomes for all students. He (2014) further noted that IoC should extend beyond mere content to encompass learning outcomes and ensure equitable access to learning opportunities (Leask, 2014).

According to Leask (2014), IoC is both a product and a process. Being a product, the curriculum is designed with setting the intercultural dimension as content, while the process is related to the methods used to achieve this interculturality. Leask (2014) mentioned that an intercultural-based curriculum should be designed with a thoughtful consideration of cultural diversity and the institutional resources that can be provided to attain the intercultural goal.

Remarkably, Jones (2014) argued that cultural diversity can be occurred within the same country and, thus, it is not always associated with border crossing. In simpler terms, “otherness” exists within the same country. Jones (2014) supported the effectiveness of considering local interculturality through replicating the intercultural experiences that have been encountered across frontiers (Jones, 2014). Jones (2014) opposed the notion that interculturality can only be developed through travelling abroad and suggested the idea of fostering intercultural competencies locally to cultivate “just and tolerant societies” and reduce learners' apprehensions about stepping outside their comfort zones (p. 8).

Grounded in these principles that are incorporated in the different processes of curriculum design, educators can design interculturally-infused syllabi. By means of these intercultural-based syllabi, three essential areas are covered. At first, intercultural content can be conveniently conveyed since an interculturally-oriented syllabus is structured to integrate intercultural knowledge, values, and perspectives. Following this, intercultural contexts are formed for the overall aim of developing an intercultural competence (Boualli, 2025; Mizab, 2020).

1.6.2. Content Approaches to an Intercultural-based Syllabus

Incorporating the intercultural dimension into syllabus design requires an understanding of key concepts. In fact, a syllabus serves as a comprehensive guide for both instructors and learners, revealing what intercultural dimensions will be covered and how intercultural communication will be instructed (Yueh & Copeland, 2015). In the field of ELT, researchers are likely to subject EFL syllabi to evaluation for the purpose of examining the cultural load and highlight educators' academic stance in approaching EFL syllabi. In this respect, some approaches have been developed in relation to what should be included in an intercultural-driven syllabus.

1.6.2.1. Context-based Approach

To enhance students' cultural awareness, Broome (1986) suggested a course that combines culture-specific elements and culture-general elements. Culture-specific elements refer to the intercultural environment while culture-general elements refer to the intercultural skills that enable individuals to adjust to the different cultural environment. This approach provides practical insights on what content should be emphasized to lead to more effective intercultural communication (Broome, 1986).

1.6.2.2. Evaluative Approach

This approach was advocated by Gudykrunst, Ting-Toomey, and Wiseman (1991). Their evaluative framework stressed highlighting the importance of evaluating students' cognitive, affective and behavioural understanding of the intercultural communication in designing an intercultural-based syllabus. Basically, they (1991) outlined core instructional dimensions, namely: Knowledge, mindfulness, skills, and motivation that serve as a foundation for material development. They (1991) further confirmed that the set of instructional dimensions are essential for an effective intercultural instruction.

1.6.2.3. Historical Materialist Approach

It was suggested by Keshishian in 2005. The focus of the syllabus according to Keshishian's approach is on how the economic systems shape and influence cultural activities and communication. Accordingly, the content of the syllabus covers the influence of competition, and consumerism on intercultural communication (Keshishian, 2005).

1.6.2.4. Multi-discipline Research Approach

Researchers like Martin and Davis (2009) proposed integrating research disciplines like “social sciences, interpretive and critical approaches to systematically study culture and inform syllabus design” (quoted in Yueh & Copeland, 2015, p.135). As such, their approach targets the need to address the complexity of intercultural learning through integrating multiple insights from different disciplines. They (2009) noted that a course syllabus reflects how intercultural communication instructors in EFL contexts support the integration of the cognitive, affective, and behavioural dimensions of intercultural competence (Martin & Davis, 2009, as cited in Yueh & Copeland, 2015).

1.6.3. Syllabus Design for ICC

Incorporating the intercultural dimension into syllabi are associated with needs analysis. As such, selecting the materials with consideration to the targeted learners is of high importance. That is why it is vital to distinguish between designing FL syllabi for general purposes or for specific purposes (Komorowska, 2006). In the current study, the OE syllabus is oriented to address general purposes that steer the EFL educational process.

As mentioned earlier, there are no clear suggestions or guidance at the hand of teachers on how to incorporate the intercultural dimension for the aim of enhancing EFL students' ICC. As a potential procedure, syllabus design should address students' ICC. Leask (2009) advocated for “the incorporation of an intercultural dimension into the content of the

curriculum as well as the teaching and learning processes and support services of a program of study” (p. 210).

Accordingly, course objectives, content, teaching, and assessment methods should revolve around promoting EFL learners’ ICC. Yueh and Copeland (2015) claimed that a language syllabus should emphasize interculturality. They (2015) further highlighted that FL higher education institutions are in urgent demand to adopt intercultural communication courses in different teaching subjects to enhance students’ ICC. Despite the fact that remarkable recent studies in Algeria brought the importance of ICC to the forefront, an intercultural-infused syllabus that addresses the development of ICC is still absent.

1.7. Instructional Approaches to Enhance Foreign Language Learners’ Intercultural Competence

Incorporating strategies into an EFL syllabus is vital in clarifying how the teaching and learning are approached. Strategies are a core component of any educational syllabi as they make the course structure more discursive. In the context of EFL education, educators are expected to develop effective strategies that would enhance learners’ ICC (Matsumoto, 2000).

1.7.1. Cultural Literary Pedagogy

This strategy is framed in the field of applied linguistics and language education to refer to the integration of literary texts into language instruction, as a means to expose learners to different cultural context. In fact, this strategy involves an analysis of literary materials to introduce learners to information about the TC (Gabrovec, 2007). In this vein, a variety of literary works have been used for cultural learning including children’s literature, drama, plays, and short stories. However, Byram (1997) opposed the traditional ways to cultivate learners’ ICC. He (1997) noted that in spite of the valuable load of culture in the materials, literature is not aligned with real life interaction. For him (1997), Literature provides students with knowledge about the TC and foreign country in isolation of real-life context.

1.7.2. Inquiry-based Pedagogy

In the general run of things, an inquiry-based pedagogy involves engaging learners in an active learning environment. In fact, inquiry-based instruction develops learners' critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and most importantly fosters their appreciation of cultural diversity. The development of these three bounds is crucial in developing learners' ICC (Dostál, 2015). The way this instruction functions is that learners encounter problems, then they start asking questions and investigate about the problem. By doing so, they use the new gathered information and test its adequacy (Oumeddour, 2021). The teacher's role is to encourage learners to ask questions about their own culture and other's culture. Supposedly, teachers give learners their space to negotiate and communicate their findings. Developing learners' problems-solving skills enable them to explore their own cultural experience and, thus, develop their ICC (Oumeddour, 2021)

1.7.3. Technology-based Instruction

Over the past decades, technology evolved tremendously as digital devices become more affordable to both institutions and individuals (Cortada, 2012). The arrival of the Internet and other related communication technologies have had remarkable consequences on EFL students' intercultural communication. With the spread of technology and its power, intercultural learning is now prioritized in FL education (Garrett-Rucks, 2018). Communicating with people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds becomes immense. Consequently, the field of FL education has experienced a change in its role to the development of skills that would meet intercultural goals through incorporating the intercultural dimensions into curriculum, classroom practices, and teacher training programmes (Williams, 2010). Therefore, implementing technology in EFL education has become a need.

Avgousti (2018) gathered research about the vital role technology plays in developing EFL learners' ICC. Avgousti (2018) noted that researchers in the field agreed on the utility of online learning platforms in providing exceptional opportunities for learners to initially explore their own cultures and equally be familiar with other cultures. These platforms enable learners to assess their understanding of cultural concepts that were challenging to be addressed in traditional classroom settings.

Furthermore, online tools facilitate learners' interactions with individuals from different cultural backgrounds and, hence, develop their intercultural knowledge and sensitivity, which are the core elements of ICC. Therefore, technology-based instruction promotes opportunities for learners to gain an insider's perspective toward target cultures' traditions, customs, beliefs, and ways of behaving, broaden their worldviews, enhance their sensitivity to different perspectives and cultural differences, and strengthen their global citizenship identity (Garrett-Rucks, 2018).

Conclusion

The importance that culture has received in the field of FL Education is deeply rooted in the interconnectedness between language and culture. Thus, most educators in the field recognized the need to incorporate culture in FL education. One of the main concerns of this chapter is to conceptualize ICC through tracing its development and exploring the various models that aim to develop the intercultural competence. Emerging from these models, two key concepts had to be included: The intercultural speaker and global competence. Further efforts were made by scholars to develop assessment models for ICC. The two last sections of this chapter are directed toward reviewing the body of literature that aimed at designing the teaching framework where focus is on developing ICC through interculturalized-based materials. The provided theoretical framework scaffolds a comprehensive picture of our

Dependent Variable (DV), and justifies our conceptual and methodological choices in coming chapters.

Chapter Two: Transmedia Storytelling in EFL Education

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Introduction

In today's interconnected world, storytelling is no longer confined to traditional narratives like books, films, or oral traditions. Instead, it has drastically evolved in response to the dynamic and interactive experience that contemporary media offer. In response to this rapid and continuous change, different methods have been explored to align with the multidirectional flows of content that are distributed across a variety of platforms. Thus, Transmedia Storytelling (TS) has emerged as a means of creation and expression in the era of media convergence.

In the era of media synergy, TS has gained a place of prominence in recent years as a form of creative convergence. Investigations from different disciplines -including media, cultural studies, marketing, and advertising- have explored TS and investigate its relevance in their practices. In fact, Henry Jenkins' article "Transmedia Storytelling" in 2003 has further enhanced academic interest in exploring TS. Likewise, the exploration of TS in educational practices has remarkably become a pervasive focus of discussion. The 21st century modern teaching that prioritizes e-learning, student-centred approaches, and constructivists learning highly requires a multi-environmental pedagogical tool that can be best viewed in the implementation of TS. As a result, an educational space for TS has been created through recent research in Transmedia Storytelling Edutainment (TmSE).

Accordingly, this chapter seeks to explore the role of TS in EFL education. It begins with theoretical foundations of TS by tapping into its definitions, principles, and its multi-environmental nature in media synergy. The origins and evolution of TS are also included to contextualize the term within convergence culture and participatory media. The chapter further examines TS as a pedagogical strategy through discussing its alignment with the communicative approach and its potentials in developing EFL learners' 21st century skills. Additionally, this chapter reviews the most influential approaches to integrating TS in EFL

contexts. Most importantly, the idea of merging TS and ICC is highlighted through addressing the significance of TS in contemporary EFL education and emphasizing its use in cultivating intercultural learning.

2.1. Understanding Transmedia Storytelling

Since its emergence, TS has been surrounded by what Scolari (2009) referred to as the “semantic chaos”. Although the changes in the media landscape have been extensively studied, the analysis of TS has become fragmented. Scholars from different fields have adapted the concept in accordance to the particularities of their areas of study. Therefore, to implement TS effectively in practice, a deeper understanding of the concept within the different clusters is needed (Cliff, 2017).

2.1.1. Definitions of the Term

TS has recently gained prominence due to the increasing interconnectedness of media platforms. The term was first coined by Henry Jenkins in 2003. In the general schema, Jenkins (2010a) defined TS as “a process where integral elements of fiction get dispersed systematically across multiple delivery channels for the purpose of creating a unified and a coordinated entertainment experience. Ideally, each medium makes its own unique contribution to the unfolding story.” (p. 944). Jenkins’ (2010a) definition conveyed the idea that stories in the context of transmediality are not consumed via a mono-media platform, but they rather traverse multiple outlets.

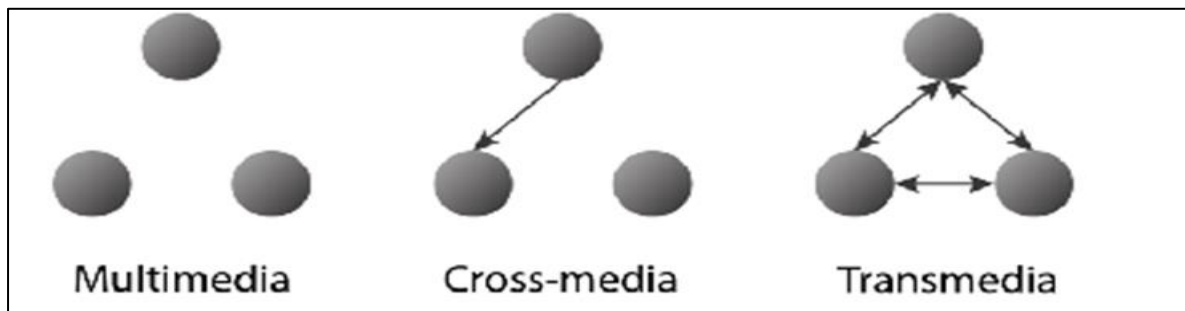
In essence, telling a single story from diverse media channels, be it a website, social media platforms, forums, plays, videos, PDF documents, games, films, books, comics and television (Javanshir et al., 2020), offers its audience an extraordinary entertaining experience. Furthermore, Jenkins (2010b) underscored the idea that each medium with its own characteristics contributes to the whole by uncovering and bringing new insights to the overall narrative.

Similarly, Weaver (2013) defined TS as the process of “crafting stories that unfold across multiple media platforms, in which each piece interacts with others to deepen the whole. But is capable of standing on its own, given the audience the choice as to how deep into the experience they go” (p.8). It follows, then, that TS refers to the process of creating a narrative that is distributed across various media platforms, like books, films, games, and social media. Each piece of the story contributes to the overall narrative and is designed to be engaging on its own so that audience can choose how deeply they engage in the experience.

It is worth noting that TS is often associated with, and at time conflated with, other closely related terminology such as multimedia, multiplatform cross-media stories, and transmedia narratives resulting in considerable semantic ambiguity (Scolari, 2009). With that in mind, the term TS is often grouped with these related concepts due to their overlapping but distinct meanings.

Figure 2.1

Transmedia Storytelling and other Storytelling Models



Note. Braguez, 2023, p. 124

As shown in the figure (Figure 2.1), multimedia generally refers to the use of various types of media together in a single project. The media might complement one another, but they don't independently advance different aspects of a story as in TS. Conversely, cross-media typically refers to a single story that is told across different platforms. Unlike TS, the content in cross-media narrative is repurposed across different channels. Accordingly, different media serve as substitute avenues for experiencing the same content. As mentioned before, TS refers

to a single story or story experience that is distributed across multiple platforms and formats, with each medium contributing uniquely to the overall narrative. The key idea here is that the story expands, rather than repeats, across different media, engaging audiences in different ways through each platform (Braguez, 2023).

In line with Jenkins' standpoint, Tour (2019) noted that TS combined both physical and digital outlets. She (2019) further argued that each medium is a self-contained unit that contributes to the overall story, creating a unified narrative experience. Another parallel view of Jenkins was expressed by Hovious (2016), for whom TS is a narrative strategy where a story is told across various media forms such as TV, films, comics, games, social media, and podcasts to create cohesive story world wherein the audience engages in an interactive experience. She (2016) added that TS is an effective educational strategy that can engage learners in the storytelling process.

Taking the aforementioned definitions together, the term has synonymously been used in educational studies with a reorientation of intent. Undeniably, the emerging cross-disciplinary educational mode initiates the merging of education and TS as two related disciplines. One of the most quoted definitions in the field of EFL education is provided by Fleming (2013). He (2013) stated that:

We might define transmedia learning as: the application of storytelling techniques combined with the use of multiple platforms to create an immersive learning landscape which enables multivarious entry and exit points for learning and teaching. It is the unifying concept of the learning environment that is important since that can become a landscape for learning that has few, if any, boundaries. With philosophical underpinnings in constructivist and connectivist theories, a transmedia pedagogy uses technology in an integrated way that allows learners and content to flow seamlessly across media platforms. (p. 371)

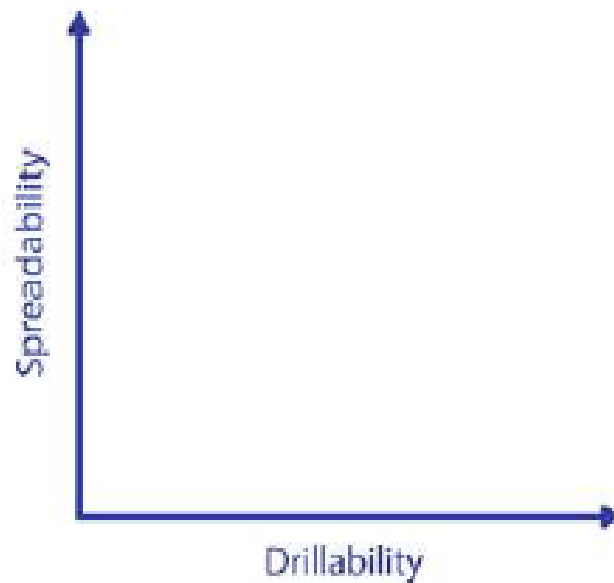
A close look at Fleming's definition reveals that transmedia learning uses storytelling techniques and multimodal platforms for the purpose of creating an engaging learning experience. Rooted in constructivism and connectivism theories that view learning as an interconnected process, Fleming (2013) highlighted that applying technology in this approach fosters learning and minimizes boundaries between different types of content. For the purpose of overcoming the semantic chaos that coincides with the term TS, some authors including Jenkins and connected viewing tend to conceptualise TS in terms of areas of concerns or principles.

2.1.2. Principles of Transmedia Storytelling and their Applications in EFL Education

Clarifying TS in terms of principles is more pivotal to highlight than providing a definition of TS per se. Jenkins (2010a) proposed **seven principles of TS**. It should be noted that the principles that are titled in a form of dichotomy where one reads "Versus (Vs.)" are not in opposition but describe two axes.

2.1.2.1. Spreadability Vs. Drillability

Spreadability refers to the audience's ability to dynamically engage in the media content through interacting with the narrative across various channels. This interaction rates the economic and cultural value of the transmedia story. The practices that involve the distribution of the story across the different outlets is part of the principle of spreadability (Jenkins, 2010a). Drillability collocates in tandem to spreadability to support a mode of "forensic fandom" that motivates the audience of the narrative to go beyond the surface and decode the complexity of the story and its telling. This, in fact, develops viewers' engagement and encourages them to navigate the story-world and drill down to understand the richness of the narrative (Jenkins, 2010a; Mittell, 2017).

Figure 2.2*Spreadability Vs. Drillability**Note.* Pratten, 2011

In this respect, Mittell (2017) noted that spreadability and drillability represent different perspectives of the experience. Spreadable media create widespread effects to the shareable content that draw the audience attention without guaranteeing lasting involvement. In contrast, drillable media engage fewer people but occupy more of their time and energies in interacting with the content. Note that when Jenkins (2010a) quoted Jason Mittell (from whom the term drillability originates), he used the terms "forensic fandom" and "magnets for engagement". In simpler terms, spreadability refers to the distribution of the story across various media whereas drillability is about giving details and different visions and revealing more secrets and facets of the story. (Jenkins, 2010a; Mittell, 2017).

2.1.2.2. Multiplicity Vs. Continuity

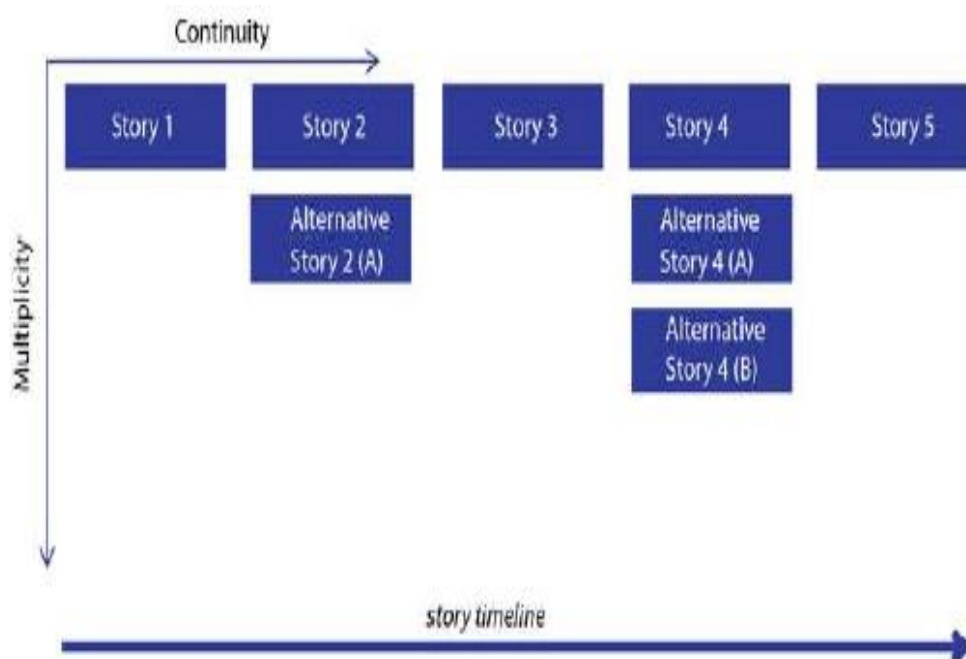
Another dichotomy that Jenkins set as a key principle is multiplicity versus continuity. Jenkins (2010a) stated that multiplicity involves transmedia stories that remain consistent so that it allows fans to enjoy alternative retellings by offering new perspectives on characters and

events. This, in fact, encourages audience to consider fan fiction and similar expressions as part of a transmedia framework (Jenkins, 2010a). To express it differently, multiplicity indicates the unauthorized extensions of the genuine work that can still enrich fan engagement and deepen their understanding of the original material.

It follows, then, that Jenkins (2010a) maintained that the audience’s pleasure to follow the story and its characters that are told in a radically distinct form is the essence of continuity. In this scope, continuity enhances the audience appreciation of the “coherence” and “plausibility” of fictional worlds (Jenkins, 2010a). Practically speaking, many fans view this continuity as the true reward for their time and effort.

Figure 2.3

Continuity Vs. Multiplicity



Note. Pratten, 2011

As displayed in the above figure (figure 2.3), the stories on the horizontal axis follow a linear sequence. This latter represents continuity that refers to the consistent and logical development of a narrative across various outlets. The complementary principle is seen in the

vertical axis that represents multiplicity in which alternative stories are presented to allow the audience to explore different take of the narrative (Pratten, 2011).

2.1.2.3. Immersion Vs. Extractability

In an exhibition on the history of motion pictures in Tokyo, Hayao Miyazaki (n.d) explained that immersion which is the ability of the audience to fully engage in fictional worlds is the driving force behind the creation of the cinema (as cited in Jenkins, 2011). In parallel, Jenkins (2010a) suggested another principle which he referred to as extractability. In fact, extractability refers to the ability of the fan to reflect on the real world in the fictional story world. This can be best seen in buying massive models that are related to the key characters, props, and settings of the narrative (Jenkins, 2010a). Jenkins (2010a) provided the example of fans' tendency to buy *Dr Who's* sonic screwdriver or dressing in *Harry Potter's* school uniform. Nowadays, cosplay events, where people dress up as their favourite anime, manga, or video game characters are spreading worldwide.

In short, immersion and extractability reflect the relationship between the transmedia fiction and our everyday experiences. As the principle of immersion suggests, fans feel that they are truly inside the world of the story. In extractability, the consumer grasps characteristics of the story with them as resources they integrate in their everyday life. In essence, extractability allows the audience to extract part of the narrative in their community and identity (Jenkins, 2010a).

2.1.2.4. Worldbuilding

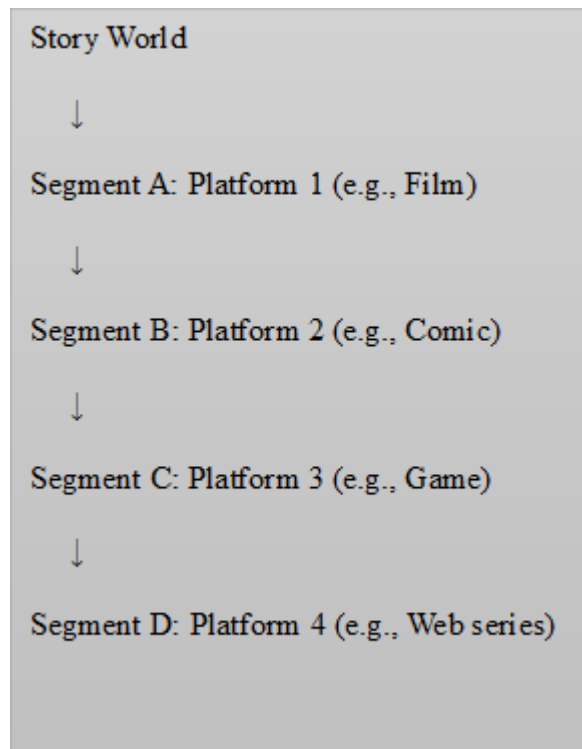
Worldbuilding in TS implies thinking of stories as universes and worlds. These stories are, then, distributed across multiple media platforms to bring that world to life from various facets. By doing so, storytellers ensure consistency and leverage the unique strengths of each medium. As such, they can offer audience a rich and engaging experience that spans across different forms of media (Jenkins, 2010a).

As such, transmedia stories are based not only on an element of the narrative like characters or specific plots, but rather on the whole fictional worlds which can sustain multiple interrelated characters and their stories. This process of worldbuilding motivates both creators and audience. This is, in fact, a key difference when comparing TS with other genres of storytelling. Unlike TS, traditional storytelling is associated with the closure wherein the audience expects to end the narrative knowing everything that is required to make sense of a particular story (Jenkins, 2010a).

Remarkably, the concept of worldbuilding seems closely linked to the principle of immersion and extractability. This is mainly because they both represent ways for consumers to engage more directly with the worlds that are represented in the narratives. Particularly, world building can raise the desire of the audience to map and master as much as they can know about universes, often through the production of charts, maps, and concordances (Jenkins, 2010a).

2.1.2.5. Seriality

Seriality refers to the way a story unfolds across different instalments or platforms over a period of time which creates a larger related narrative. Instead of retelling the exact story across different channels, each segment in a transmedia narrative uniquely contributes to the overall narrative. In this scope, a serial breaks down a story into chunks which are satisfying on their own but motivates us to come back for more. The new chunk often expands to focus on a sub-element of the narrative, be it the world, the character or the plot (Jenkins, 2010a).

Figure 2.4*Seriality*

Note. Jenkins, 2010a

Similar to traditional storytelling especially in classic film series, TS seriality reflects similar serialized storytelling but goes further by exploring different media for the purpose of exploring the facets of the story. Thus, the audience's task is to follow the narrative across the different platforms so as to decode and fully understand its complexity. TS seriality helps encourage audience's active participation and exploration (Jenkins, 2010a).

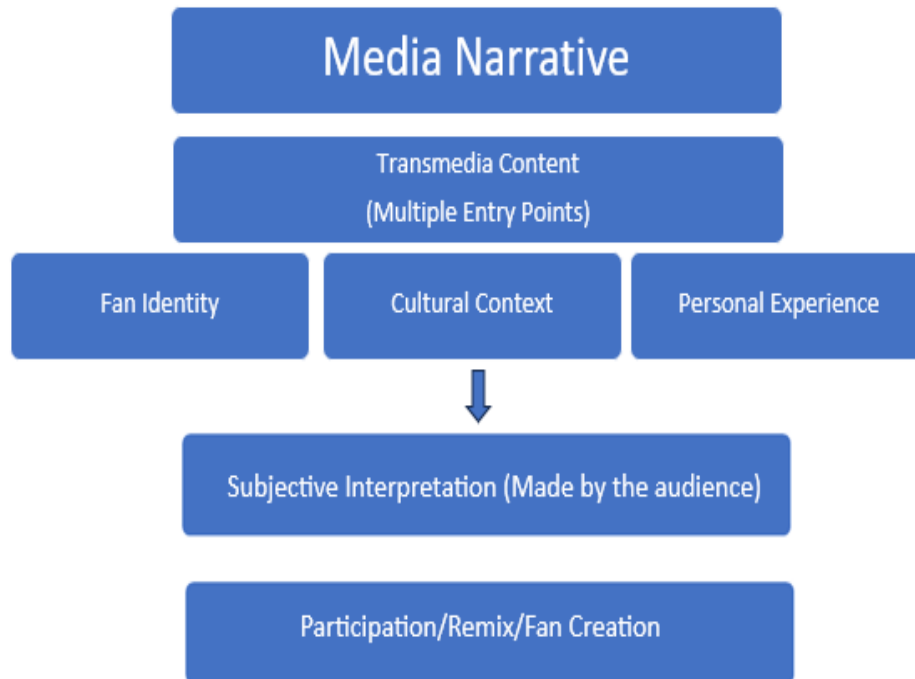
2.1.2.6. Subjectivity

According to Jenkins (2010a), the principle of subjectivity is suggested to describe the different media platforms that view the narrative from different perspectives, generally through the eye of the characters or factions. Subjectivity allows audience to engage with the story from multiple angles. Engaging with the narrative across multiple media enables audience to gain deeper insights into the motivations, experiences, or backstories of various characters. For example, a movie focuses on a plot, while a novel or comic book explores a particular character,

and a video game permits the player to participate and act like another character (Jenkins, 2010a).

Figure 2.5

Subjectivity



Note. Jenkins, 2010a

Therefore, subjectivity introduces layers of complexity to the story, as audiences can experience different subjective realities within the same narrative universe. Accordingly, the principle of subjectivity enriches the narrative by allowing for a more nuanced, multi-dimensional understanding. Besides, it enhances both character development and worldbuilding, and encourages audience participation by prompting them to piece together the various subjective viewpoints to form a more complete picture of the story (Jenkins, 2010a).

2.1.2.7. Performance

In the context of TS, the performance principle indicates the role of the audience in the process of storytelling. This suggests that the audiences are no longer passive consumers but rather they are actively engaged in the story and contribute to the story-world. The principle of

performance can take various forms (Jenkins, 2010a). In the first place, (a) Fan Participation refers to the discussion of fans that expands the narrative universe and sometimes influences the direction of the narrative. (b) Interactive Media is another form wherein the audience can shape the story through their interpretation. The final form to consider is (c) Role Play which involves Live-Action Role Playing (LARP) that allows fans to embody characters or personas from the story, performing in ways that add to the narrative cultural presence (Jenkins, 2010a).

Similar to Jenkins' conceptualization, Beddow (2012b) broadens Jenkin's framework to suggest *Transmediation vs Transmedial Conception* as a new dichotomy that some researchers generally refer to when discussing TS principles. In this respect, transmediation is defined by Beddows (2012b) as the connected deployment of a single story across multiple media channels. By providing this definition, she (2012b) distinguished transmediation from transmedial consumption. This latter refers to the practice of consuming narratives across multiple media story modes and engaging the audience in those narratives.

Another key principle is *Adaptation Vs. Extension* which is not part of the foundational principles of TS; however, Jenkins incorporated it in subsequent writings. Adaptation entails reproducing the genuine narrative by applying the uppermost changes in the new medium (Jenkins, 2010a). On the contrary, the principle of extension expands our understanding of the original narrative through reshaping the story in a way that brings new insights into the whole narrative. For the purpose of simplifying the whole narrative, Jenkins (2010a) provided two examples; Lawrence Oliver's Hamlet is an adaptation and Top Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead as an extension, expanding from Shakespeare's original text to focus on the secondary characters of the story (Jenkins, 2010a).

Jenkins' (2010a) principles of TS can remarkably develop language education. By implementing *Spreadability vs. Drillability* in language education, educators can create content that encourages sharing while allowing for deeper exploration (Gee, 2007). Moreover,

Continuity and Multiplicity helps maintain coherent narratives across various media, enriching students' understanding (Snyder, 2008). Incorporating immersive worlds allows learners to interact meaningfully with content, while the principle of emergence enables students to contribute their own material, fostering engagement (Blikstein, 2013). Kress (2010) noted that the embodiment of *Subjectivity* within narratives promotes personal connections and empathy among learners.

Furthermore, encouraging *Performance* invites students to participate actively through role-playing and creative expression, enhancing their investment in the learning process (Steinkuehler & Leander, 2010). Lastly, utilizing *Collective Intelligence* emphasizes community collaboration, allowing students to build on each other's insights (Ito et al., 2013). By integrating these principles, educators can create a dynamic and participatory learning environment that harnesses the potential of TS in language education.

2.1.3. Media Synergy: The Multi-environmental Nature of Transmedia Storytelling

The multi-environmental nature of TS demonstrates the concept of media synergy, where narratives unfold across various vents. In this respect, each medium contributes to the overall story in unique ways. The interconnectedness of the narrative across various channels allows its audience to engage with the story and, therefore, create a more immersive experience. Each medium enhances the overall story through the particularity and the strengths of each medium (Jenkins, 2006).

Media synergy in TS both enriches the narrative itself and fosters audience engagement as well. By encouraging audience to explore different aspects of the story across multiple platforms, fans develop a personal connection with the narrative. This active participation transforms fans into co-creators, as they interpret and interact with the various elements of the story world (Jenkins, 2006). The synergy between different media means that each platform

can introduce new dimensions to the narrative, enabling fans to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the fictional universe.

Moreover, Jenkins (2006) asserted that TS leverages media synergy to expand world-building. In effect, this offers broader contexts that deepen audience comprehension. For instance, a film might present essential characters and plot points, while a companion novel or graphic novel can provide rich backstories or explore side narratives that enhance the main storyline. This interconnectedness encourages fans to seek out and engage with multiple formats and enrich their overall experience (Jenkins, 2006).

The strategic cross-promotion inherent in media synergy further amplifies audience engagement. When different platforms support and enhance one another, they create a cohesive marketing strategy. Distributing the narratives over different outlets drives audience to explore various formats (Jin, 2019). A popular television series, for example, can lead viewers to read graphic novels or play video games that expand on the show's universe. Therefore, perusing the narratives in their entirety enriches their audience's understanding and enjoyment (Jenkins, 2006).

As fans immerse themselves in these various media, they often engage in discussions and create their own content. Interacting within these various forms, the engaged participants develop a sense of community and collaboration (Jin, 2019). This synergy not only enhances individual experiences but also contributes to a vibrant and collective engagement with the narrative. Notably, the emergence of fan theories, fan fiction, and other grassroots expressions creates a dynamic ecosystem that celebrates and expands the original story (Jenkins, 2010b).

In essence, the multi-environmental aspect of TS exemplifies media synergy by facilitating a dynamic and interconnected narrative experience. This approach invites audience to engage in ways that single-medium stories are unable to offer. It ultimately enriches their investment in the narrative universe. As storytelling continues to evolve in this synergistic

landscape, it highlights the potential for narratives to adapt and thrive. Thus, it meets the desires of audience to seek deeper connections with the story (Jenkins, 2006).

2.2.Context and Origins of Transmedia Storytelling

TS has emerged as a dynamic narrative approach that bridges multiple media platforms to create a rich and interactive experience for audience (Jenkins, 2006). By exploring the origins of TS and the context of its emergence, we provide a better understanding of how this innovative form of storytelling shapes modern language classrooms.

2.2.1. The Origins and Evolution of TS

Chevalier (2004) noted that TS is traced back to the early 1750s. The move of a single character from one medium to the other marked the beginning of transmediality. It all started with the character Mary Midnight from a story in a printed magazine to a performed play (as cited in Beddows, 2012a). During the 1980s, a similar approach has been adapted in many contemporary franchise projects such as *Beetlejuice*, *Ninja Turtles*, and *Who Frames Roger Rabbit?* as a direct result of technology development and market convergence. Another example at that time that is among the longest-running modern franchises is *Batman*. It originally started as a comic book during the late 1930s to expand to other media sources in the 1980s (Long, 2007; Meehan, 1991; Smith, 2008) (as cited in Beddows, 2012a).

However, the term TS did not come to use until the end of the 20th century with the unprecedented success of *The Blair Witch* in 1999. The film had large fans as it was the first story to use the internet as a platform for the extension of the story. The website of the movie offered its fans an interactive experience through providing them with the opportunity to be engaged in an extended universe that is related to the mythology of the film. During the same year, the most famous TS ever in history *The Matrix* was created across different platforms: Films, animation, web-comic, games, etc (Beddows, 2012a).

In today's digital era, innovations like virtual reality and augmented reality are offering audience with a different experience where they are engaged and interact with the story in an extraordinary way (Cardwell, 2003). The 20th century digital tools have been able to unify the distinct forms of media into one whole. The era has marked the emergence of TS to mean a seamless blending of media that are highly connected. Nowadays, TS highlights the shared features between the different media rather than emphasizing the differences.

In tracing the origin of TS, Freyermuth (2017) has differently approached its emergence based on two different perspectives: The technological evolution of the concept and its cultural origins. The former implies that transmediality is traced back to the advent of digital technology that in turn transformed analogue qualities into numeric values. The shift to digital media brought media forms into a common platform. This, in fact, enables the blending of different styles and techniques from previously separate media. Unlike the predigital era where different media used separate tools and formats like texts, sounds, and images, TS promotes an immediate interaction with the audience through blending different media (Freyermuth, 2017).

In exploring the origin of TS from a cultural standpoint, Freyermuth (2017) noted that every period of time has its unique storytelling methods that are used to understand and share knowledge. In preindustrial time, knowledge was shared through speech and writing. With industrialization, writing assumed control over orality with abstract textualizations. During the late 19th century, there were remarkable efforts to enhance text-based traditions by implementing new industrial media, including sound and image recording, radio, TV, movies, photography, etc. At that time, setting educational aims in accordance with the availability of this media was not possible due to economic expenditure and technological limitation.

It was until the late 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s that the traditional text-based narratives were constructed. Michel Foucault (1969) and Ronald Barthes (1967) announced "the death of the author" to know that the traditional source of knowledge and the way it is

transferred dissipated. Ten years later, John François Lyotard announced the end of “grand narratives” that used to unify knowledge. In the last two decades of the century, overcoming textuality in favour of transmediality was the direct result of the rise of digital communication and culture. Therefore, the concept of TS has emerged to replace the traditional ways of narratives as it offers innovative ways of knowledge sharing by integrating various media and forms of expressions (Freyermuth, 2017, pp. 103-105).

2.2.2. Convergence Culture and Participatory Media

In laying the foundation for TS, Jenkins (2006) introduced the concept of convergence culture to denote the merging of multiple media platforms where audience actively engages and participates with the content across various media outlets. In this culture, the lines between producers and consumers are less defined as fans contribute and expand the world narrative (Jenkins, 2010b). In reviewing the literature of this section, three concepts were clearly revealed: Media convergence, participatory culture, and collective intelligence.

To start with, (a) media convergence allows the content to be distributed via multiple media channels, such as: TV, film, books, comics, games, websites, social media, mobile apps, blocks, and podcast. Within the same line of thought, Jenkins (2011) noted that convergence culture is the flow of content across various media platforms where audience engages and interacts with the content. It is grouped under the umbrella term media convergence. Its meaning and shift have been related to particular culture and collective intelligence. Users now engage, interact with, expand, and share the narrative.

In explaining the concept of (b) participatory culture, Jenkins (2006) stated that:

The term, participatory culture, contrasts with older notions of passive media spectatorship. Rather than talking about media, producers and consumers as occupying separate roles, we might now see them as participants to interact with each

other...Consumers have great ability to participate in the emerging culture than others.
(p.3)

Reflecting on Jenkins' extract, one can note that audience participation is a principal attribute in TS. To put it differently, the audience in TS has power over the creation and the interpretation of the narrative. Fans of a story have experienced the shift from passive spectators to active "hunters and gatherers" of content (Jenkins, 2009, p.46).

In this context, the terms *produsage* and *prosumption* are used to describe the audience's turn from being passive spectators to active participants in the new media landscape. The influence of audience over narration can be best seen in the example of the franchise *Star Wars*. *Star Wars* industry was pressured by its fans to include stronger female characters and characters of colours in films like *Force Awakens* (2015) and the *Rogue One* (2016) (Guynes & Hassler-Forest, 2018). With Web 2.0, internauts can now create their own content and their own fan fiction. Jenkins (2010b) pointed out that active participation is a core component of convergence culture. In simpler terms, narratives are not only controlled by the industry or the company as the consumers largely influence the overall narratives.

Jenkins (2010b) added that the original medium is like an input from companies. Based on this input, consumers engage and create what is referred to as fan fiction. This process reflects the dynamics of participatory culture where consumers are active participants in the creation of content. The game *Counter-Strike* is a good example of participatory media. It started as an adaptation of *Half-Life* that is used to create the game. The content was largely influenced by the gaming community through online discussion (Deuze, 2016).

The third concept of (c) collective intelligence that Jenkins (2006) inspired from the French media theorist Pierre Levie refers to the collaborative power of audience in bringing in new insights and shaping the overall narratives (as cited in Cliff, 2017). As suggested by Jenkins (2006), collective intelligence is the ability of virtual communities to collaborate

echoes of their knowledge or expertise to make it a whole. That is to say, participants essentially work together towards a shared goal. In this context, Lévy (1997) referred to the concept of collective intelligence as the sum of many minds.

Films such as *The Matrix* are good illustrations of franchise cinema where supplemental information expands beyond the film industry into various cultural productions. For *The Matrix*, the audience was encouraged to explore different media platforms, including the movie, the animated series, video games, comics, websites, and online fan forums. Indeed, these platforms are explored by the audience to fully grasp the film's mythology and continue their storytelling experience through the sequels. Act as an illustrative case, *Enter the Matrix*, has expanded the original narrative to the game through not merely adapting the story but enhancing it by allowing a minor character from the game Niobe to overshadow a main character from the film Morpheus. Such a multiplatform approach offers fans a new narrative perspective within the world (Jenkins, 2006).

2.3. Transmedia Storytelling as an Educational Pedagogy

Despite the fact that it commenced in the media industry, TS has been adapted in education due to the growth of digital media and Educational Technology (EdTech). As a matter of fact, merging the two disciplines is undeniably aligns with the cross-disciplinary mode of study in education (Kalogeras, 2014). Therefore, an educational space for transmedia pedagogy is highly warranted. From an educational perspective, TS implies intentional use of multiple platforms to deliver narratives in a sense that learners are engaged across various media outlets (Gambarato, 2012; Scolari & Masanet, 2021).

It is significant to highlight that the diverse nature of TS pairs with contemporary educational theories. In this scope, Scolari et al. (2018) noted that TS aligned with constructivism as it is a learner-centred approach. Similarly, Giroux (2010) argued that TS is compatible with transformative learning. This latter refers to recreating and transforming

assumptions in education due to the new practices in media. It is important to note that diversity within transmedia content shapes both transformative learning and pedagogy as well as Transmedia Storytelling Edutainment (TmSE) (Giroux, 2010).

One must consider that TmSE is defined as “a critical-creative pedagogy that derived from a narrative structure that uses multiple platforms and forms to extend stories for the purpose of education” (Kaloregas, 2014, p. 116). As society is experiencing a dramatic change from totally focusing on delivering and consuming information to a more participatory approach that emphasizes active involvement, TS has been established as a new model of learning that is necessary to consider in all educational practices (Kaloregas, 2014, p. 117). As such, transmedia pedagogy sets students at the centre of the learning process as Jenkins (2009) referred to the audience of TS as “hunters and gatherers of putting information from multiple sources to form a new synthesis” (p. 46).

At the most basic level, TS serves as a source of knowledge for learners. Historically speaking, TS has provided learners with the ability to examine and merge the wide body of information (Kaloregas, 2014). According to the webpage of Educause Learning Initiative, “the oral tradition of knowledge transfer and exchange has served the basis for education since human began teaching one another” and that transmedia stories are built on this model “by incorporating rich, dynamic media” (Educause, January 2007).

Moreover, TS is a powerful educational tool that offers several advantages and enhances the learning experiences. Due to the democratization of TS production beside the new international emerging model in e-education, boundless opportunities are created for students around the world. One of the core benefits of TS is that it supports personalized learning. Due to the fact that TS narratives are non-linear as they are distributed across the various channels, students have the opportunity to engage with the media that resonate most with their learning

styles and interests (Jenkins, 2011). Instructors should, therefore, initially test students to know about their learning styles and adapt their classroom techniques accordingly.

In keeping with this reasoning, Kalogeras (2014) noted that TS is “rightfully positioned to solve issues related to learning styles and stereotypes that are associated with cultural differences” (p. 120). Similarly, Markhan (2004) argued that considering the diverse nature of TS and its ability to harmonize with students’ learning style has a direct influence on learners’ performance. The multi-environmental nature of TS is powerful in accommodating the different learning styles by delivering content across various media. Essentially, the uniqueness of each medium as shown in table 1 taps into specific sensory channels (Gambarato, 2012; Scolari, 2013).

Table 2.1

Learning Styles and Corresponding TS Stimuli

Learning Styles	TS Stimuli
Visual Learners	Visual Narratives; imagery and videos
Auditory Learners	Sound effects and Podcasts
Kinaesthetic Learners	Games, digital community and hands-on tasks
Reading/Writing Learners	Textual content, blogposts, articles and novels.

Note. Adapted from Gambarato & Alzamora, 2018; Scolari & Masanet, 2021

As displayed in the above table (table 2.1), transmedia pedagogy aligns with individual learning needs and learning styles. In short, the diverse modalities that TS offers support the differentiated instructions and enhance individual learning preferences.

In addition, TS has been shown in education to address students’ multiple intelligences. Sturdevant (1998) detailed the relationship between the type of intelligence and its TS

corresponding feature: Logical intelligence (the plot of the narrative), linguistic intelligence (Text-based narratives), visual spatial intelligence (symbols), musical intelligence (sounds), and intrapsychic intelligence (self-reflection and inner guidance). The visual and linguistic variety channels transmedia narratives offer nurture all of these intelligences. TS can significantly enhance motivation by making the learning experience more engaging, immersive and interactive. Patrick Hogan (2025), a professor of English and Comparative Literature at the university of Connecticut viewed TS as an effective educational tool that motivates learners. Davis (2000) argued that “the hemispheres of the brain work together when emotions are stimulated, attention focused and motivation heightened” (p. 148).

The multimedia nature of TS offers an opportunity to promote learners’ autonomous skills (Benson, 2001). In fact, transmediality provides EFL learners with a prospect to extend their learning outside the classroom through its richness of websites, online videos, electronic books, . . . etc (Ahmed et al., 2020; Ubaedillah & Pratiwi, 2021). Schemenk (2005) added that the immense spread of the autonomous learner concept is mainly because of the multiplication of the media landscape in language education.

2.4. Transmedia Storytelling in EFL Education

In the field of language education, there has been a growing demand recently on the integration of innovative approaches that enhance learners’ engagement and develop their learning outcomes. As such, TS has increasingly become prominent in educational settings. Its growing integration into education, especially in EFL learning, holds promising potentials (Scolari, 2013).

2.4.1. The Pedagogical Potentials of Transmedia Storytelling in EFL Classes

In a fast-paced world that is characterized by constant change and a drive for innovation, TS can be implemented to make a better English teaching-learning experience. In essence, TS has evolved from oral communication to text-based narratives and gradually

progressed to interactive media that are implemented in various platforms (Jupit et al., 2012). The assorted nature of TS in which multiple channels are merged for the purpose of creating a unified experience creates an opportunity for students to develop a personal connection with complex media (Amirulloh & Zikri, 2019).

Upon conducting a case study, Bruhn and Henry (2013) reported that the availability of different platforms supports students' ability to interact with the narrative whether it is text, photos, videos. In explaining the concept of TmSE, Kalogeras (2014) pointed to the possibility that TS introduces to students to use both e-learning and traditional effective approaches. In other occasions, she (2014) affirmed its potential in combining images and texts. Overall, TS has been applied in the EFL classroom to enhance learners' ability to interact across various media (Thomas et. al. 2007).

In a general sense, storytelling is essential in FLT and learning (Atta-Alla, 2012). In this respect, studies showed that storytelling has proven effective in developing EFL learners' skills. According to Sanchez (2014), storytelling significantly develops linguistic skills in the EFL classroom. Sanchez's (2014) findings revealed that storytelling enhances the five language skills that are in particular: Listening, speaking, reading, writing, and oral interaction. Karlsson (2012) stated that due to the multifaceted nature of storytelling that can include different types of materials, actual and fictitious information can be easily learnt, recalled, and reused.

It is important to note that with the rise of modern technology, the concept of storytelling goes beyond its broader sense. Owing to the growth of electronic media, the concept has significantly evolved in a new form of narrative. In today's digital era, interactive and TS leverages technology and diverse mediums to explore complex themes and engage audience in innovative ways (Scolari et al., 2018). TS, in particular, extends narratives across multiple platforms, allowing for deeper immersion and audience participation. In its newest

and most complete version, TS offers a participatory and immersive experience to learners (Kalogeras, 2014).

The effectiveness of TS in general population classes have stimulated educators and researchers in the field of language learning to consider the utility of TS in language classrooms. They have been investigating the efficacy of TS in developing several dimensions of language learners, notably in students' engagement, collaborative and participatory learning, critical thinking and problem solving, contextualized language learning, intercultural awareness, and digital literacy and technological skills (Kim & Lee, 2018). Therefore, a respected body of literature has been established for the implementation of TS in language classes.

In undertaking an exploratory study on the impact of TS on Saudi EFL students' motivation, Al-Amri (2021) pointed out that one of the most reported benefits of TS is that it fosters students' motivation and enhances their engagement inside the classroom. Compared to learners who were taught English through traditional curriculum, those who used TS were more motivated and engaged (Aktas & Yurt, 2017). An analogous finding was reported by Liu, Tai and Liu (2018) wherein they explained the effectiveness of TS on learners' performance.

A well-established body of literature focused on cultivating language learners' CC via TS (Abdelmageed & El-Naggar, 2018; BavaHarji et al., 2014; Cigerci & Gultekin, 2017; Harji, 2017; Hu et al., 2017; Rahimi, 2019). Harji (2017) reported that a period of 16-week treatment in which digital storytelling project was applied has proven effective in enhancing EFL students' language outputs. Similarly, Kimura (2010) noted that TS has addressed various oral language features. Abdelmageed and El-Naggar (2018) and BavaHarji et al. (2014) also confirmed that accuracy, fluency, and complexity as the main three facets of the language learners' oral communicative competence has been improved when multimedia-based storytelling were integrated in EFL classes.

Most importantly, the implementation of TS enhances the development of EFL learners' language skills. As for reading, TS can be regarded as a functional tool for developing EFL learners' reading skills. Camarillo et al., (2008) undertook research on the development of learners' reading through TS. Their results showed that EFL students' reading skills were improved due to the integration of TS in EFL classes. Besides, the findings revealed that learners who took part in the experiment were motivated and had a willingness to engage in reading activities.

The use of multimedia narratives that are synthesized from texts, photos, videos and audios remarkably develops the writing skills of a FL learner (Rahimi, 2019). Several research in the field of language education has highlighted the relationship between multimedia narratives and the development of EFL learners' writing skills and promising findings were reported in due manner (Abdolmanafi-Rokni & Qarajeh, 2014; Buckingham & Alpaslan, 2017; Yamaç & Ulusoy, 2017). Nassaji and Tian (2010) added that that EFL students' writing skills were enhanced in collaborative digital storytelling group than individual storytelling group.

Upon examining previous research, one can note that the existing literature on the effectiveness of TS on EFL learners' receptive or input skills are less compared to those that highlighted TS impact on productive skills. Despite that, some influential studies on the efficacy of TS on the development of receptive skills were reported. Renowned scholars in the field of language education noted remarkable improvement in the listening skills of EFL learners who were exposed to transmedia narratives (Cigerci & Gultekin, 2017; Hu et al., 2017). Other educators and researchers in the field credited the improvement of EFL learners' reading skills to their use of TS materials (Gee, 2007; Kern, 2000; Murray, 2015; Scolari, 2009).

As in mainstream classes that we mentioned in the previous section (section 2.3), TS is a practical approach for addressing EFL learners' personalized learning as well. First and

foremost, multiple intelligences and individual learning styles have a lot in common. Basically, TS is defined as multimodal entities which can cater to linguistic, visual-spatial, musical, sequential or logical, kinaesthetic, interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence (Jenkins, 2006). With all these variations, TS allows students to be physically engaged through creating movements in drama. Furthermore, it permits EFL learners to focus on interpersonal environments, solving problems, and setting goals. For collaborative and emotionally engaged learners, TS has many advantages. In this respect, the storyteller and the audience construct a strong and relaxed relationship in which fans are fully engaged in the narrative.

When considering its motivating role in FLT, TS are remarkably advantageous in motivating EFL learners to continue studying the language. It also offers students to work out their imagination by getting involved into the stories or identifying themselves as one of the characters in the story especially in games (Salem, 2016). In a study conducted by Azizah et al. (2011), multiple intelligences ensured effectiveness of Transmedia narratives for preschool children who were under study. The findings revealed that TS teaching for preschool learners, who were learning a new language, could attract their interests and engaged them during the learning process.

Within the same line of arguments, Dujmović and Bančić (2014) discussion paper of computer-aided storytelling in the EFL classroom highlighted the most significant benefits and practical uses of computer-aided storytelling in EFL classrooms. It, particularly, enhances learners' language production, motivation, and narrative skills (Wang et al., 2020). Most importantly, Pietschmann et al., (2014) posited that TS helps EFL students in learning about new world cultures, new vocabulary, and new dimensions.

2.4.2. The Compatibility of Transmedia Storytelling within the Communicative Approach

One of the aims of our thesis is to address the usefulness of TS in facilitating Algerian EFL learners' oral participation. Algerian educators have urged the need to adopt a Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach that sets interaction at the heart of language teaching and learning. As mentioned in previous sections, TS, which tells a narrative across various channels, supports engagement and encourages exploration (Jenkins, 2006). This rightly conform to the communicative approach that in turn focuses on developing learners' interactions (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Since TS prioritizes real-life communication and supports the active and meaningful use of language, integrating TS in EFL classrooms promotes an environment wherein learners would interact with authentic contents across various media. As such their engagement and motivation are developed accordingly (Gee, 2007). Through TS, learners can explore narratives through various outlets including videos, games, social media that enable them to practice English in various contexts and promote contextualized language use (Kearney & Schuck, 2006).

Another area where TS and CLT converge is in their shared focus on the same competencies and skills, including interaction, engagement, critical thinking, language skills, and cultural skills (Scolari, 2013). When assessed against Brown's (2000) characterization of CLT approach, TS is proven well-suited. As in CLT, TS is a student-centred activity; it focuses on linguistic strategic, sociolinguistic, functional, and intercultural aspects of communicative competence (Al-Amri, 2021). Al-Amri (2021) further noted that TS can be designed as a collaborative task that is the most favourable in CLT for the aim of facilitating interaction and, thus, communication.

TS is also compatible with the communicative approach because it is a task-based activity. A good communicative classroom activity “asks students to do a task, gather information from a partner, or express an opinion about an engaging topic” (Heng, 2013, p. 375). In creating a story, students are required to go through various phases like creating the narrative topic, gathering information, and writing the story in the preparation stage. During the next phase, learners search for suitable media elements, record their narratives, create the video, and finally share it with others for follow-up discussions and interactions (Pegrum, 2014).

2.5. Approaches to Transmedia Storytelling in EFL Education

There are many approaches to TS in EFL education. These approaches differ in their focus, offering a unique learning experience when they are adopted holistically. Exploring the diverse approaches to TS that can be implemented in EFL education offer insights to a modern language classroom. As such, TS focus extends beyond the linguistic competence to emphasize intercultural communication (Vasquez, 2011).

2.5.1. The Oral-Based Approach

The oral-based approach to TS emphasizes the use of oral narratives to enhance language learning. This approach values the importance of oral communication in developing EFL learners’ engagement and improving their language skills. Implementing the oral-based approach to TS allows learners to develop their listening skills and structure the narratives into an oral production without the pressure of being engaged in a writing task (Lockett, 2011).

It is noted by Kalogeras (2014) that the oral facet of TS develops learners’ confidence. This is mainly due to the interactive nature of TS engaging activities. She (2014) added that TS not only enriches learners’ language learning experience but also enhances their awareness on various levels: cognitive awareness, critical awareness, intercultural awareness, and digital

awareness. Furthermore, TS enhances language learners' understanding of narrative elements, such as character development and plot (Kalogeras, 2014).

2.5.2. The Interactive Engagement Approach

The Interactive Engagement Approach to TS is rooted in the idea that the consumer of the narrative is actively engaged with the storyteller. In the context of EFL education, students are prompted to interact with one another, asking questions and providing feedback. After introducing the TS materials, engaging learners in follow-up interactive activities strengthens their critical thinking and comprehension of the narrative. By engaging in discussions, students learn to recognize different perspectives and adapt their storytelling techniques based on audience's reactions. Thus, they intensify their understanding of narrative's structure and audience's engagement (Miller & Pennycuff, 2008).

2.5.3. The Collaborative Approach

A collaborative approach to TS in EFL education prioritizes collaborative learning in which learners unite to actively engage in a narrative (Pegrum, 2014). In simpler terms, TS involves learners in a shared process of narrative creation. In fact, this approach reinforces active participation and awareness that make learning more effective. The collaborative approach reflects all the components and processes of TS (Sanchez, 2014). Beside working on readymade TS, learners are encouraged to collaboratively create their own narratives. In this context, Pegrum (2014) maintained that this model implies a sense of co-authorship.

In practice, learners collaborate to develop the narrative wherein each student takes a role of either the writer, the illustrator, or the editor. The multimedia integration is a core element in this project, allowing learners to use various media such as videos, social media, podcasts, Etc. To harness the cultural load of TS, learners are required to be involved in partnering with other classrooms whether they are local or international (Jones, 2021; Kim & Patel, 2024; Smith, 2022). This cultural exchange is significant to broaden students'

understanding of others, and thus foster their empathy and respect of linguistic and cultural variations.

2.5.4. The Dynamic Approach

This approach shares a common concept with the interactive engagement approach on the interaction between the storyteller and the audience. However, this approach differs in the sense that it offers an experience where the audience not only engages in the narrative but actively shapes it (Jenkins, 2006). In the context of EFL education, students adapt the narratives based on others' reactions. The responsive, engaging, and dynamic power of interaction fosters EFL learners' critical thinking and improvisation skills. Therefore, the dynamic approach permits learners to adapt their stories accordingly and, thus, enhance their overall communicative skills (Camarillo et al., 2008).

2.5.5. The Integrative Approach

An integrative approach to TS within EFL curriculum can remarkably cultivate learners' engagement and language acquisition. By employing multiple media platforms, educators create a learning environment that reflects contemporary communicative experiences (Jenkins, 2006). This approach fosters linguistic skills and encourages creativity due to the fact that learners navigate diverse storytelling formats (Gee, 2007). Moreover, incorporating transmedia elements enhances personalized learning experiences, accommodates varied learner preferences and promotes collaborative projects (Vasquez, 2011). Kostoulis et al. (2011) argued that curricula that integrate TS enables students to be engaged in learning and allows them to employ reasoning skills, and critical reflection and analysis.

2.5.6. Narrative-based Approaches

Other researchers in the field refer to TS approaches in terms of how narratives are represented across various media platforms (Dena, 2011). This results in two approaches to TS: (a) The mono-medium story approach that entails the representation of distinct narratives in

various media platforms within a single story. This is in general referred to as a franchise project. In simpler terms, a franchise features related works (like a book, a film, a game console, etc.) that share a common theme. Unlike traditional adaptations of a narrative, all stories in each medium contribute to the overall narrative, and that writers and producers work collaboratively across the different outlets (Dena, 2011).

The second approach is referred to as (b) the integrated approach which requires its audience to consume all of the media elements to understand a single narrative. The TS writers' role shifts to guide the audience from one medium to the other. Unlike the first approach that does not necessitate getting engaged in all stories, this approach requires the audience's engagement and interaction with all the media (Dena, 2011). Overall, this approach involves a unified story that is distributed across various media. This requires the audience to engage with all the media so as to get the elements that are required for the full understanding of the story.

Together, these approaches create a rich environment for TS to be effectively implemented in EFL education. It is essential to note that these approaches are employed in a synergistic manner; that is to say, implementing TS approaches in an EFL classroom does not require a clear-cut distinction between the various approaches. Integrating TS approaches in EFL education enhances learners' engagement and active learning (Scolari et al., 2018). Therefore, the absence of a rigid categorization within TS approaches reflects the nature of TS narratives in contemporary media.

2.6. Transmedia Storytelling and Intercultural Communicative Competences

TS and ICC in EFL education form the focal point of our research. although there is a plausibility of literature that directly addresses their intersection, it is highly imperative to critically examine the existing scholarships that bridge the two concepts to exceedingly highlight the research gap.

2.6.1. The Usefulness of Transmedia Storytelling in Promoting an Intercultural Learning

From the outset, storytelling has historically been considered as a cultural practice that covers all aspects of human life. Children in the past were culturally educated through storytelling in multiple ways: Oral folktales, drawing, singing, playing, etc. (Gamper & Videsott, 2021). The shift from traditional storytelling to TS enables deeper, more interactive, and culturally enriched storytelling experiences. As mentioned before, studies that examine the relationship between TS and ICC are limited (Byram, 1997; Scolari, 2013). Nevertheless, some references on their intersection have been noted.

At its core, storytelling in its right elevates cross cultural awareness and supports cultural and linguistic variations in the classroom (Atta-Alla, 2012). Likewise, Gill (2012) suggested that storytelling and cultural differences create social networking that involves people from different cultural backgrounds (Atta-Alla, 2012). As it pertains to TS, Lowenthal (2008) undertook a study that highlighted the positive impact of TS in connecting people across different cultures.

Similarly, Rokni and Qarajeh (2014) conducted research that indicated the effectiveness of TS on fostering key competencies of lifelong learning, interpersonal and intercultural competence, as well as cultural awareness, and expression. Focusing their study on the pedagogical significance of TS, Herr-Stephenson and Alper (2013) declared that the implementation of TS in language education cultivates learners' cultural competencies (cited in Amirullah & Zikri, 2019).

Upon undertaking an experimental study to investigate the impact of storytelling on developing communication skills of EFL female students in Saudi, Juraid and Ibrahim (2016) found that TS, as the standard-bearer in storytelling genres, addresses students' openness to world cultures and allows them to become critical and creative thinkers. Within the same line,

Ioannu-Georgiou and Verdugo (2011) noted that TS allows learners to interact with people across borders and most importantly elevates their curiosity to know more about others' culture, and thus, develops attitudes of openness, awareness, tolerance, and acceptance towards others' outlook on life (Cited in Juraid & Ibrahim, 2016).

As mentioned in the first chapter, having this understanding and holding these attitudes are essential in developing ICC. Costello (2015) agreed with the idea that TS equips EFL learners with the skills of viewing the world from others' perspectives. For Castello (2015), the diverse nature of stories "enables students to confront and heal the ones that divide your humanity, to be willing to listen to stories that are different, and truly hear and believe them without judging or moralizing" (as quoted in Juraid & Ibrahim, 2016, p. 91).

In her book, *Transmedia storytelling and the New Era of Media Conversions in Higher Education*, Kalogeras (2014) referred to the efficacy of TS in developing cultural awareness of learners in many parts of the book. She (2014) noted that TmSE could represent cultures and their related values beside supporting the educational practices that aim at developing learners' cultural tolerance and commitment to non-sexist and non-racist attitude. She (2014) added that TmsE "provides effective discourse and create situation in which those who are participating will have opportunities to advance beliefs, explain challenge, and defend, assess, and judge arguments" (p.118). Niskala (2020) was probably the only researcher that stated directly that TS in EFL education is essential to develop ICC. Niskala (2020) said that "storytelling in education allows, learners to explore different perspectives, helping them develop empathy and critical, thinking skills, essential for intercultural communication" (p. 6).

2.6.2. The Intersection of Transmedia Storytelling and Intercultural Communicative Competence

In the context of language education and cultural exchange, TS and ICC intersect in captivating way. However, their intersection remains an underexplored area in academic

research. By definition, TS uses various platforms to tell a narrative across multiple channels that in fact provides multimodal exposure to cultures (Jenkins, 2006). Language learners who involve in transmedia narratives are introduced, not only to the language, but also to the different cultural contexts that targets their intercultural awareness. Another area where TS and ICC interact lies in the ability of TS in enhancing learners' critical thinking toward cultural differences and engaging them in intercultural communication. Thus, it directly targets Byram's (1997) concept of critical cultural awareness.

Moreover, the participatory and collaborative nature of TS is remarkably related to the essence of ICC. Indeed, participatory culture offers an opportunity for TS users to collaborate with others who are culturally different and this facilitates intercultural communication (Jenkins, 2006). Adopting a TS approach to language learning and teaching aligns with the objective of intercultural learning.

As stated in chapter one, ICC is based on five key constituents: knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, attitudes, and critical cultural awareness (Byram, 1997). By integrating TS in EFL classrooms, learners can be engaged in diverse cultural narratives. Parallely, Transmedia narratives present cultural knowledge, foster skills of interpretation and allow learners to discover different cultural practices and communicate with others, and notably cultivate learners' attitudes towards cultural differences and, thus, enhance EFL learners' ICC (Scolari, 2013).

As indicated earlier, direct studies that link TS and ICC are relatively sparse and limited notwithstanding that research on both concepts has been growing. We, the researcher, view that their intersection is a fresh and potentially impactful area of exploration. That's why the need to address this gap sets at the heart of our research. At this stage, it is important to mention that the link between TS and ICC are underexplored due to the fact that they are emerging fields, having a complex intersection that in turn challenge traditional research frameworks.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, it has been demonstrated that a deep understanding of TS requires a holistic exploration of the concept, its principles along with investigating its multifaceted nature. Since media growth and technological evolution have been historically interfering with TS understanding and modelling, it was highly required to devote the second section to explore the origins and the context of the concept. It is important to note that throughout section three and four all the scholars that the researcher referred to supported, in some respect or another, the efficacy of TS in educational setting, particularly its effectiveness in EFL teaching and learning. Furthermore, the literature evinces the most salient approaches to TS. This latter yields a thorough discussion of two renowned visions on how TS is approached in EFL classes.

Through the view of the literature on TS and ICC, the researcher aims to note explicitly the usefulness of implementing TS in EFL classes. Far from being deterministic, the views that were presented in the last section are adopted by the researcher throughout this chapter and the rest of the thesis. The theoretical framework that was outlined in this chapter as well as the preceding one underpins and justifies the choice of our research methodology which will be explored in the following chapter.

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Introduction

Based on asserting the lack of the intercultural load in the Oral Expression (OE) syllabus at the Department of English at LTU, the present research fundamentally aims at developing students' ICC through integrating TS materials in the OE syllabus. To accomplish the research's aim, the methodology design must be meticulously prepared. Research designs which refer to the decisions that the researcher makes to outline the framework that guides the study. This, in fact, involves planning the methods, strategies, and procedures that the researcher uses to collect, analyse, and interpret data and; thus, address the research problem.

This chapter, then, outlines the study's philosophical and procedural frameworks that are covered in the section of research paradigm. This is followed by an identification of research variables for clarifying the measurable elements in the study. Further, this chapter defines the research setting and the participants. A detailed section of this chapter is completely devoted to data collection tools along with their rationales and limitations. This part is to be completed by an explanation of data analysis procedures. As a final point, highlighting ethical considerations is incorporated.

3.1. Research Paradigm

A good understanding of the different aspects that determine research paradigms is highly required for the researcher to establish a well-suited approach and methodology that would considerably improve the quality of the research. Foundationally, the term ‘paradigm’ was first used by the American philosopher Thomas Kuhn (1962) to point to the philosophical mode of thinking. Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) narrowed the term research paradigm to acclimate educational studies; thus, they (2006) stated that research paradigm is used to define a researcher’s worldview. By worldview, they (2006) referred to the shared beliefs, the schools of thought or the perspectives that govern the researcher’s orientations.

Similarly, Guba and Lincoln (1994) defined a paradigm as an overarching framework that guides the researcher’s actions and investigations (cited in Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). In simpler terms, research paradigms denote the boundaries and the parameters that direct how the researcher thinks about the best way to find answers to their research questions. As such, the research paradigm heavily influences the research quality and impacts its focus. This is mainly because it determines how the research proceeds into collecting and analysing the data, and shapes how the researcher interprets the findings (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017).

3.1.1. Philosophical Assumptions

It is imperative for the researcher to adequately locate all the research into a paradigm. This, in fact, involves justifying the endorsed philosophy. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), there are four key elements that expound the research paradigm; ontology, epistemology, methodology, and axiology (Cited in Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017).

‘Ontology’ is centred on the assumptions that are related to the nature of reality. The question ‘what is reality?’ is established as the focal point of ontology. In this sense, ontology addresses the researcher’s beliefs about the nature of truth. Accordingly, three beliefs or ontologies have been noted: The belief that there is one single reality, the belief that there are

multiple realities, and the belief that realities can be interpreted and negotiated (Scotland, 2012).

As described by Cooksey and McDonald (2011), 'epistemology' is concerned with what accounts as knowledge within the world. That is to say, epistemology covers the basis of knowledge, its nature, forms and how it can be acquired and communicated to other individuals (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). While ontology deals with the nature of reality, epistemology is about how reality is examined. Put simply, epistemology stands for how an individual understands knowledge and how knowledge can be acquired.

In line with this, epistemology addresses the question 'how I can know reality?'. Within the literature, three epistemologies have been defined, namely (a) knowledge can be measured using reliable designs or tools, (b) Reality can be interpreted to uncover the underlying meaning, and finally (c) knowledge should be examined to solve the problem (Cunningham & Fitzgerald, 1996). For Leavy (2017), the researcher's epistemological stance helps in understanding the role of the researcher and his/her relationships with other participants in the study. It is important to note that the combination of different ontologies and epistemologies gives rise to three dominant research paradigms: Positivism, constructivism, and pragmatism.

From an ontological perspective, we dispose that reality is subjective and socially constructed. According to Schwandt (1998), a social constructivist ontology holds that reality is not an objective entity and, hence, it is constructed and shaped through social processes. Throughout our research, we believe that cultivating EFL learners' ICC is a dynamic process that is influenced by individuals' social and cultural behaviours. Amid intercultural interactions and TS engagement, learners construct their own understanding of interculturality which asserts our belief that reality is subjective. Saunders et al. (2007) mentioned that a social construction of reality implies interpretivism in which interpreting individuals' personal

perceptions offers a clear image on their behaviours, and how they perceive and interpret reality (Gahin & Myhill, 2001).

From an epistemological perspective, we adopted a balanced approach that combines both positivism and interpretivism philosophies. For positivists, there is one fixed reality in the world, and that this reality can be measured. A positivist paradigm seeks to explain causal relationship in real world. Therefore, the primary aim for them is to formulate hypotheses and make predictions and inferences (Saunders et al., 2007). Elements from the positivist paradigm are incorporated in different sections of our research. In line with positivism, our research focuses on observable social realities that entail gathering reliable data through hypotheses. These hypotheses were formulated based on the existing literature which we, then, tested. Besides, our approach involves collecting and analysing quantitative data. This, in fact, can be seen through our hypotheses that we tested by means of an experiment.

To answer our research questions, it is not feasible to align solely with positivism. We must integrate elements from the interpretive perspective in our study. This is mainly because interpretivism is best suited to the social sciences as it emphasizes consideration of unique experiences of individuals. This approach asserts that making generalizations of human behaviour is difficult (Saunders et al., 2007). As for our research, the participants' exposure to TS involved multiple intercultural perspectives that were presented in diverse channels. This exposure allowed them to build an intercultural understanding as they interpreted, negotiated, and integrated these perspectives into their own perceptions. Thus, epistemology recognizes the personal and context-dependent nature of knowledge construction.

Therefore, our research falls into the pragmatism research paradigm which emphasizes a comprehensive vision that pragmatically combines the strengths of multiple philosophical assumptions to address complex educational phenomena. Proponents of this paradigm asserted that applying pluralistic approaches is highly required for the quality of the research.

Subsequently, this paradigm is an endeavour to advocate the use of mixed-methods approach in research to better understand, explain, and justify human behaviour (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017).

To reiterate, this paradigm is thought to be the most appropriate for our research. This is mainly because it provides the opportunity to incorporate elements from both positivism and constructivism. This results in a full recognition of the value of both objective measurement and subjective interpretation in understanding the development of learners' intercultural competence.

'Axiology' is another key element of research paradigm. It refers to the rule of values in research. According to Finnis (1980), axiology is concerned with making value-based decisions and understanding concepts of what is right and wrong in undertaking research (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). This, in fact, involves the researcher's stance on the influence of their values as well as the values of everyone who takes part in the research process.

From an axiological standpoint, the researcher is aware of the sociocultural aspect of the speech community that directly influences our design and the choice of the TS materials. In the process of evaluating official documents and designing intercultural materials, the researcher's intention is far from critiquing the curriculum or sabotaging the efforts that were made in designing the OE syllabus, but rather it aims at improving their qualities. Moreover, participants' values should be considered. In this study, the researcher accounts for learners' cultural background and personal values that openly affect how they engage with TS and how they construct meaning. It should be noted that this subjectivity is central to the study and should be highlighted as part of axiology.

In this value-oriented approach, ethical considerations are as important as the researcher's and the participants' value. Ethical considerations require the researcher to fully respect the values and beliefs of participants as far as culture is concerned. Since axiology

determines the researcher-participant relationship, one can note that the researcher's interaction with the participants can be described as dialogical and reciprocal.

3.1.2. Research Approach

This research endeavours to undertake a rigorous investigation on the effectiveness of TS in developing EFL learners' ICC. Our philosophical perspective is rooted in the pragmatic paradigm that determines the focus, the approach, and the mode of enquiry (Kumar, 2011). We have mentioned in the previous section (3.1.1. Philosophical Assumptions) that within the pragmatic paradigm the researcher can deploy the methods using all relevant approach as long as it best suits the study and enables the researcher to test the hypotheses and achieve the aims.

It is a common practice among researchers that data is handled using three fundamental research approaches: The qualitative approach, the quantitative approach, and the mixed-methods approach (Kumar, 2011). However, some researchers believed that there should be only two distinct frameworks referring to the qualitative approach and the quantitative approach (Morgan, 2007). In that respect, they strongly adhered to either the positivist traditions that favour the quantitative approach or the interpretivist/constructivist traditions that advocate the qualitative approach (Fielding & Fielding, 1986; Guba & Lincoln, 1985; Kuhn, 1962). As opposed to this view, Chaudron (1988) noted that, in practice, when adhering to one approach, the researcher inadvertently utilizes elements from the other approach. Thus, proponents of this view advocated the mixed-methods approach as a middle ground for the researcher to benefit from aspects of both approaches.

The qualitative approach refers to the method of analysis that yields data which are not expressed in numbers (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Qualitative research aims at gaining in-depth insights into individuals' situations, beliefs, attitudes, and experiences. The parameters in qualitative designs are flexible, non-linear, and evolving. For this, the qualitative approach is said to be context sensitive that favours investigators' subjectivity (Kumar, 2011). Within this

approach, the data is analysed by means of summarizing, categorising, and interpreting (Kumar, 2011). The research method in qualitative studies include interviews, focus groups observations, and content analysis (Khan et al., 2023). Therefore, the study designs in qualitative research are based on deductive logic rather than inductive logic.

A quantitative approach, as asserted by Khan et al. (2023), uses numerical data to quantify patterns and state the relationships between variables, leaving no room for the researcher to intervene. Kumar (2011) confirmed this idea and added that quantitative studies are structured and unbiased as inquirers manage all the procedures while dealing with measurements. This establishes a full awareness about whether they are in need of more data and when they reach saturation. In quantitative studies, the research is directed toward testing hypotheses through providing in-depth investigation for the phenomenon under study based on numerical data (Mizab, 2020). This approach enables the researcher to generalize the findings to a larger population. The research methods that can be implemented in quantitative studies are “experiments, surveys, and statistical analysis of existing datasets” (Khan et al., 2023, p. 6). The table below (Table 3.1) illustrates key differences between the qualitative approach and the quantitative approach.

Table 3.1*Comparison of Qualitative and Quantitative Research Approaches*

Qualitative Approach	Quantitative Approach
The use of qualitative methods	The use of quantitative methods
Its primary aim is to understand human Behaviours	It aims at quantifying patterns and relationships
Naturalistic and uncontrolled observation	Well-structured measurement
Subjective	Objective
Discovery-oriented, exploratory, expansionist, descriptive, and inductive	Verification-oriented, confirmatory, reductionist, inferential, and deductive
Process-oriented	Outcome-oriented
Ungeneralizable findings	Generalizable findings
Posits a dynamic reality	Posits a stable reality

Note. Adapted from Nunan, 1992, p.4

The mixed-methods approach is a blend of the aforementioned approaches as it merges the qualitative approach with the quantitative approach. This is mostly done for the purpose of complementing and enhancing each other's stamina (Khan, et al., 2023). To gain deep insights on the research problem, researchers deploy the mixed-methods approach that combines numerical and non-numerical data collection and analysis methods. Kumar (2011) asserted that the amalgamation of both qualitative and quantitative approaches is effective in a study that necessitates many-sided exploration or when the findings of one approach's methods validate the findings of the other.

Dawadi, et al. (2021) justified the need to adopt mixed-methods approach in five rationales. They are as follows:

- First, fusing the qualitative approach and the quantitative approach provides a holistic view of the research problem through integrating numerical data with detailed insights.
- Second, the integration of the two approaches expands the study through widening the area of inquiry. Therefore, the possibility to generalize the findings is elevated.
- Third, the mixed-methods approach leverages the strength of both qualitative and quantitative approach and addresses their weaknesses.
- Fourth, the combination of the two approaches helps drawing more rigorous conclusions.
- Fifth, the triangulation of data from diverse methods allows for a cross-verification of the results.
- Finally, the sixth ground for mixing the two approaches is to treat the research issues from different angles to get a deep understanding of the phenomenon under study since the qualitative approach illuminates the context behind the quantitative results.

Accordingly, we adopted a mixed-methods approach by merging both of quantitative and qualitative approaches' methods for the purpose of comprehensively address the research questions. For the qualitative approach, the study involved a document analysis that was applied to evaluate the intercultural load of second year OE syllabus at the Department of English at LTU. As a valuable preliminary step, an observation was set to bring insights about teachers' practices inside the classroom. Moreover, in-depth interviews were conducted with inspectors from the MESRS.

The current research also appealed to the quantitative approach in the vein that numerical data are gathered by means of questionnaires that were administered to both second year EFL students and teachers at the Department of English at LTU. Besides, an experiment

was conducted to identify the significance of the teaching intervention and ensure control over variables. In addition, end-of-phase interviews were conducted at the end of each instructional unit of the experiment to provide qualitative layer of the quantitative data. That is why it was hard to make a clear cut between both approaches especially in educational studies.

3.1.3. Research Design

Research designs refer to the frameworks that are arranged by the researcher to direct the collection and analysis of data in a study. Kothari (2004) defined the research design as :

The conceptual structure within which research is conducted; it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data. As such, the design includes an outline of what the researcher will do from writing the hypothesis and its operational implications to the final analysis of data. (p.31)

In simpler terms, the research design specifies how the research will be conducted, from the formulation of the hypotheses and their practical implications to data analysis that leads to reasonable and dependable results. This arrangement is effective as it keeps the researchers on track and focused throughout their study.

A mixed-methods research design is an approach that is characterized by the collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data in a single study. Putting mixed-methods research into practice is a challenging task for researchers (Creswell, 2014). In mixed-methods approach, three main research designs have been identified: Convergent parallel design, explanatory sequential design, and exploratory sequential design.

3.1.3.1. Convergent Parallel Design

Convergent parallel design in a mixed-methods approach is a research strategy wherein qualitative and quantitative data are collected simultaneously to better understand the research problem (Creswell, 2014). At the level of analysis, qualitative and quantitative data are analysed independently. The obtained results from the analysis of data are compared and

integrated. The convergence of the findings validates the findings and provide deep insights of the research topic (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2018). The convergence parallel design is effective for researchers who are dealing with complex social phenomenon.

3.1.3.2. Explanatory Sequential Design

Explanatory sequential framework is a mixed-methods research design that entails two distinct phases in which quantitative and qualitative data are collected sequentially, following a particular order. In the first sequence, the researcher begins with collecting quantitative data followed by an immediate analysis of the obtained data (Fetters, Curry, & Creswell, 2013). Based on the findings from the quantitative phase, the next sequence involves collecting and analysing data by means of qualitative methods. This phase aims to explain the findings that are obtained in the first phase, provide context to the quantitative results, and a deep of the underlying reasons.

After conducting both research approaches sequentially, an overall interpretation is provided (Creswell, 2014). It is worth mentioning that the explanatory sequential design is the most popular and the widely applied research design in educational studies (Ivankova et al., 2006). Similarly, Guetterman et al. (2015) maintained that the explanatory sequential design combines both efficiency and comprehensiveness in answering research questions and addressing the research hypotheses. Although beneficial, Bryman (2016) noted that in implementing the explanatory design, researchers sometimes devalue the qualitative results and treat them as a “mere add-on” to justify the quantitative results, rather than explore new insights (p. 111).

3.1.3.3. Exploratory Sequential Design

Similar to the explanatory sequential design, this type of design incorporates the collection and the analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data. However, the first phase involves the collection and analysis of qualitative data. This design, in fact, is done to explore

a new phenomenon or develop a theory through initial qualitative insights. The initial phase of collecting and analysing qualitative data aims to explore possible trends and themes which can be used as the basis for gathering quantitative data (Creswell, 2014). Based on the findings from the qualitative phase, the researcher then designs and implements a quantitative study to explore the relationships in qualitative data. In short, the rationale behind undertaking this design is to reinforce the qualitative data with measurements of larger sample of population so as to ensure the generalizability of the findings (Creswell, 2014).

In our study, the mixed-methods approach was applied as the overarching framework wherein we combined both qualitative and quantitative approaches in a single study. The mixed-methods approach was further layered to our research design. Within the mixed-methods approach, our design falls mainly into the exploratory sequential design with some aspects from the embedded design. Despite the fact that embedded designs are not widely used, they are effective in employing secondary dataset to enhance and provide context to the primary data (Creswell, 2014). On this basis, the exploratory design which is the predominant and the extensively used design in this study is evident in the following procedural sequence.

Empirically, we initiated the study with an evaluation of second year OE syllabus to assess its intercultural load. For the purpose of contextualizing the findings of our evaluation, we followed this by conducting a semester-long observation of teachers' practices prior to undertaking the experiment. This was, then, succeeded by an interview with inspectors from the MESRS. In the following phase, quantitative data were collected by means of questionnaires that were submitted to second-year students and teachers at the Department of English at LTU. Moreover, an experiment was designed to test the effectiveness of TS materials on EFL learners under study.

As for the embedded design, it is visible when interviews were conducted with two participants from the EG at the end of each instructional unit to reflect on the progress, the

effectiveness of the treatment, and the flow of the experiment. To put it differently, conducting interviews after each instructional unit provide the researcher with real-time insights about the treatment phase.

3.2. Research Variables

Operationalizing concepts in a measurable term to define variables is remarkably significant in research. Unquestionably, identifying variables is tremendously crucial mainly because they represent the characteristics that can change within the study (Kumar, 2011). Interestingly, Kerlinger (1986) strongly associated variables with research problem; he (1986) defined the research problem as the interrogative sentence or statement that asks ‘What relation exists between two or more variables?’ (p. 16).

Before delving into our research’s variables, a brief overview of the definition of variables is provided. In this respect, Leavy (2022) perceived variables as the characteristics that can be different from one element to another or can vary over time. Variables allow the researcher to measure, observe, and consistently analyse various research phenomena. Briefly, examining the interactions and relations that occur between the existing variables is the focal point of scientific research (Mackey & Gass, 2005).

In the body of literature, variables are typically classified into independent variables (IV) and dependent variables (DV). Minorly, there are other types of variables, though of lesser importance, that are worthy to mention.

- **The IV** is considered the cause or the influence in the study. Therefore, any change that may occur in the DV is attributed to the IV (Mackey & Gass, 2005). In this study, the IV is TS. Particularly, this variable is the experimental treatment that was designed to influence the development of the ICC.

- **The DV** is the variable that is measured to see the effect of the IV. To put it simply, it is the outcome that the researcher intends to develop (Mackey & Gass, 2005). In the present research, ICC represents the DV.

Other variables, though less crucial, may contribute to the results and intervene during the course of study. They are as follows:

- **Control Variables** (Contextual Factors) aims to keep consistency and to ensure validity. The control variables in our inquiry are: students' English proficiency level, classroom environment, and duration.
- **Moderator variable** influences the interaction between the IV and other variables. It changes the relationship between IV and DV. In practice, some factors may influence the effect of TS, including learners' background and style.
- **Intervening variables** refer to the variables that may interfere with the results of the study but are not included in the original study (Mackey & Gass, 2005). This may include learners' motivation and engagement.

Identifying variables in research is important because it helps in guiding the research design and directs data collection and analysis. By clearly defining these variables, the study established a well-structured framework for analysing the effect of the IV, TS, on the DV, second-year EFL students' ICC.

3.3. Research Setting and Participants

The context of the research has been widely recognized as a key element in scientific research as it has a direct impact on the significance of the study. By referring to the context of the research, two aspects are identified: The setting that determines the place where the study is undertaken, and the participants that are included as part of the inquiry. It is critical that both of these aspects should be closely considered and elaborated so that meaningful conclusions can be reached (Dikilitaş & Griffiths, 2017).

3.3.1. The Setting

The research study was conducted at the Department of English at LTU. The OE module is taught to all students at the first level of the Higher Education system (the license). First, second- and third-year license students enrolled in this module attend two sessions per week, for a total of three hours. It is worth mentioning that unlike the primary, middle, and secondary education that implements communal curricula all over Algeria, curricula for Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) is different from one institution to the other at the level of higher education. This is mainly due to the differences in teachers' qualifications as well as the expected outcomes (Mizab, 2020). As such, we requested the OE Canvas (Appendix A) from the Department of English for research purposes.

The Department of English at LTU offers facilities and supports the teaching-learning process. Throughout the experimentation period, the classrooms where the OR classes took place were located near the Department. The classrooms were appropriate and sizable for the number of participants under study. Furthermore, the teacher (the researcher) could conveniently access the necessary materials like the data-show, the speakers, etc. Changing the setting of the classroom by having some students out and others in, or delivering students' materials during some sessions were totally tolerated by the administration staff.

3.3.2. The Target Population

In research, outlining the target population is unquestionably crucial since this step defines the individuals whose characteristics are pertinent to the study's objectives. This, in fact, ascertains that later findings are meaningful and applicable (Creswell & Clark, 2017). According to Alvi (2016), a target population includes all the individuals who share the criteria that meet the research investigation's area of interest. He (2016) added that the target population should be exclusive in a sense that all elements can equally represent the population of interest (Casteel & Bridier, 2021).

In this study, our target population encompasses university teachers and students from one high education institution: Larbi Tebessi University (LTU)- the Department of English, and experts from the MESRS pedagogical agencies. It is deemed necessary to note that all the mentioned communities are accessible population. In line with our research objectives, the choice of the target population was driven by the following factors. For teachers, they have better chances to be engaged in intercultural interactions whether in national/international conferences or while travelling abroad as part of the professional development programmes. Besides, all of them hold post graduate degree (Magister, or Doctorate PHD) which is required to get a teaching position at universities in Algeria. Having this qualification, one can ensure that their linguistic and intercultural levels are relatively considerable.

Concerning students, all of them were second year LMD students at the Department of English at the LTU with an intermediate to upper intermediate level of English proficiency. Their engagement in the experimental period was during the academic year 2022-2023. Their total number is 219 students (N=219), divided by the administration into six intact groups. Choosing these students as our target population was motivated by the following factors:

- Second-year students at the Department of English were chosen because they possessed an upper-intermediate level of English proficiency which permitted them to effectively express their thoughts and ideas in English and had enough practice of English in different social setting.
- First-year students are excluded as it was their first year of extensive exposure to English and they might face various linguistic challenges.
- Third-year students are also excluded. Third year was their final year of studying license; many might transition out of university and that, subsequently, resulted in limited opportunities for continued language practice.

The population for this study also consisted of twelve general inspectors from the MESRS. Their contact information and email addresses are available on the official ministry website. Their availability allowed for direct communication to arrange interview meetings and negotiate accessibility.

3.3.3. The Sample and the Sampling Technique

Choosing the right sample of individuals as research participants is crucial for the validity of the research findings. In research, individuals or members that form the overall population are referred to as elements. As such, selecting elements from the target population for conducting a research project is what makes a sample. In case when all elements are involved in the study, it is called a census (Lammers & Badia, 2013). However, this latter is not very common in most research contexts.

The reason for employing sampling rather than involving all the elements in the study is that it would be tremendously expensive, time-consuming, and arduous to examine the entire population for a research study (Makwana, et al., 2023). Vitaly noted, sample design is a prerequisite procedure that precedes the process of collecting data. This is mainly because the quality of research is presumably determined by the well-suitedness of sample design (Cohen, et al., 2000).

Specifically, there are two major types of sample design. They involve probability sampling, and non-probability sampling.

- In probability sampling, respondents are selected using random methods. Actually, randomization ensures that all units have an equal chance of participating. Moreover, it allows representative members to provide results that are generalizable and, thus, can be applied to wider population (Kothari, 2004). However, probability sampling can be complex and costly, and most importantly it may result in access issues (Tayie, 2005).

- Non-probability sampling refers to a method of sampling whereby no random element is involved. In other words, not all individuals in a population have a chance of being selected. This approach to sampling is often more cost-effective and less time-consuming than probability sampling. However, it carries a risk of bias and can result in findings that may not be generalizable to the wider population (Cohen, et al., 2000).

Deciding whether to implement the probability sampling design or the non-probability sampling design is determined by interrelated factors. In fact, employing one technique is shaped by four points; the purpose of the study, the value and the cost, time constraints, and the amount of error allowed (Tayie, 2005). Therefore, the alignment between methodological choices and the four factors should be considered.

3.3.3.1. Students' Sample and Profile

The sampling procedure that was conducted to select students is the non-probability sampling technique. Out of the overall population of second-year students (N=219), 76 of them have been selected. Particularly, students were selected using convenience sampling. This type of sampling assumes that the population units are alike and that any unit may be chosen for the sample (Hale & Napier, 2013).

Vitally noted, the researcher favours this type of sampling because the students' groups were divided by the administration. As such, it was not possible for the researcher to apply randomization. Since the study is quasi-experimental in nature, the 76 students who were assigned to the teacher (the researcher) formed the two subgroups: The Experimental Group EG (n=38) and the Control Group CG (n=38). Purposefully, the students' sample were used for both the experiment and the students' questionnaires.

Our sample is second year LMD students of English at the Department of English at the LTU. Participants engaged in the experiment over the course of the academic year 2022-2023. All participants have studied English for at least eight years. Accordingly, they possessed

an upper-intermediate proficiency level of English language. For the aim of classifying and organizing the data properly as well as preserving anonymity, we attributed IDs to the sample units. The following table (Table 3.2) illustrates their IDs and origins.

Table 3.2. Students' Profile

Group	ID	Origins	English Exposure	Group	ID	Origins	English Exposure	Group	ID	Origins	English Exposure
		S001	El Kouif		8 Years		S027		Cheraia	8 Years	
	S002	Tebessa	8 Years		S028	Bir Later	8 Years		S054	Guelma	8 Years
	S003	Tebessa	8 Years		S029	Morsott	10 Years		S055	El Kouif	9 Years
	S004	Tebessa	8 Years		S030	Tebessa	8 Years		S056	Kbarit	8 Years
	S005	Hamamat	8 Years		S031	Tebessa	8 Years		S057	Khenchela	8 Years
	S006	Tebessa	9 Years		S032	Hammamat	8 Years		S058	Tebessa	9 Years
	S007	Charaia	8 Years		S033	Tebessa	9 Years		S059	Cheraia	8 Years
	S008	Tebessa	8 Years		S034	Meridj	8 Years		S060	Hamamat	8 Years
	S009	Tebessa	8 Years		S035	Bakaria	8 Years		S061	Lougla	8 Years
	S010	Om Bouagui	9 Years		S036	Batna	9 Years		S062	Tebessa	8 Years
	S011	Tebessa	8 Years		S037	Bir later	8 Years		S063	Laouinet	8 Years
	S012	Laouinet	8 Years		S038	Khenchela	10 Years		S064	Djijel	8 Years
Experimental Group	S013	Tebessa	8 Years		S039	Tebessa	9 Years		S065	Negrin	8 Years
	S014	Cheraia	8 Years		S040	Tebessa	8 Years		S066	Tebessa	10 Years
	S015	Morsott	8 Years		S041	Laouinet	8 Years		S067	Ma Labiod	8 Years
	S016	Morsott	8 Years		S042	Tebessa	8 Years		S068	Tebessa	8 Years
	S017	Bejaia	8 Years		S043	Setif	8 Years		S069	Tebessa	10 Years
	S018	Morsott	9 Years		S044	Cheraia	8 Years		S070	Cheraia	8 Years
	S019	Laouinet	8 Years		S045	Tebesssa	9 Years		S071	Adrar	8 Years
	S020	El Oued	8 Years		S046	Tebessa	8 Years		S072	Khenchla	8 Years
	S021	Ouenza	8 Years		S047	Morsott	8 Years		S073	Laouinet	8 Years
	S022	Tebessa	9 Years		S048	Zargua	9 Years		S074	Morsott	9 Years
	S023	Tebessa	8 Years		S049	Bir Later	8 Years		S075	Bakaria	8 Years
	S024	Tebessa	8 Years		S050	Tebessa	10 Years		S076	Bir Later	8 Years
	S025	Bir Later	9 Years		S051	Tebessa	8 Years				
	S026	El Kouif	8 Years		S052	Algiers	8Years				

3.3.3.2. Teachers' Sample and Profile

The respondents who took part in the observation consisted of teachers who instructed OE classes for second year students during the academic year 2022-2023 at the Department of English at LTU. The sample is comprehensive, including three teachers, forming the whole population of teachers who were responsible for the subject area within our scope of study. They are one male and two females. For the questionnaire, it was administered to ten teachers within the same institution. They were either teaching OE during our research (the observed sample), have previously taught OE before, or are specialized in it. The Table that follows (Table 3.3) Shows their profiles.

Table 3.3*Teachers' Profile*

N	Age	Subject	Qualification	Teaching Experience
T001	33	OE Literature	PHD	3
T002	41	OE Culture	Magister/Doctoral Student	10
T003	36	OE Sociolinguistics	Magister/Doctoral Student	10
T004	32	OE Didactics	Magister/Doctoral Student	7
T005	47	OE Literature	PHD	15
T006	30	OE Grammar	Magister/Doctoral Student	1
T007	43	OE Writing	Magister/Doctoral Student	11
T008	25	OE Literature	Master	1
T009	34	OE Linguistics	Magister	8
T010	42	OE Literature	Magister	11

It should be emphasized that all teachers who were part of our research are Algerians. Besides, they hold different teaching qualifications, ranging from Master, and Magister, to PHD. Another notable disparity is that they teach varied subject-specialization, and have different experiences as well.

3.4. Data Collection Instruments

The process of gathering accurate data from diverse references to respond to the research problems, and to arrive to reliable outcomes is known as data collection (Bryman, 2016). Subsequently, choosing the appropriate data collection tools for the research is paramount because they provide the framework for gathering evidence and assuring the validity and accuracy of the study. The choice of data gathering instruments unquestionably influences the quality of the research findings by making them critical to the research inquiry (Bryman, 2016). Likewise, a range of data gathering tools that align with our study's objectives were selected to effectively address the research questions.

3.4.1. Data Collection Instruments for the Exploratory Study

Exploratory research tools were firstly utilized to uncover the underexplored aspects of intercultural learning in EFL education. Using a document analysis and an observation as our first sequence of the triangulation design method played a huge role in validating our research gap as well as providing the required data. Furthermore, interviews were conducted at different layers of the design.

3.4.1.1. Document Analysis

Document analysis is a secondary data collection tool that examines and interprets existing documents, including written materials, images, and multimedia. Purposefully, this data collection method is applied to understand the different perspectives in an area of study (Pawar et al., 2023). Within the same line of thought, Bowen (2009) defined document analysis as a data collection tool that involves finding, extracting, valuing, and integrating data retrieved

from documents. He (2009) added that document analysis yields data that are then sorted into major themes and categories, precisely through content analysis. In describing the procedures for document analysis, Bowen (2009) noted that document analysis requires reviewing the document schema to get an overview of the content (skimming), examining the contents in details (scanning), and interpreting it by conducting content analysis, and finally developing themes through thematic analysis.

Performing document analysis in research offers numerous advantages. In particular, it provides the researcher with a great amount of information that are mostly accessible. Additionally, it allows for deeper understanding of underlying themes and patterns within the obtained document. Besides, it is efficient in the sense that it is a cost-effective and a non-intrusive method. However, document analysis has potential bias as it reflects the author's viewpoint (Baron, 2015).

To overcome its limitation, syllabus evaluation rubric for document analysis is conducted as our data collection tool. Notably, it involves a systematic analysis of the content of the syllabus under study for the aim of evaluating its structure, alignment with the stated objectives, and mainly its design. For a researcher to effectively employ content analysis, a predefined code has to be applied (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). As such, we used a predefined coding criteria for our syllabus evaluation rubric.

Subsequently, we employed a syllabus document's evaluation checklist (Appendix B) to score the OE *Canevas* (Appendix A) that is taught at the Department of English at LTU. It is, in fact, an extensive checklist with 11 criteria. These criteria include the following dimensions: The logical sequence and organization of content, relevance of objectives, content focus, cultural awareness and sensitivity, cultural knowledge, compatibility with learners' needs and expectations, cultural integration, alignment with instructor expectations, instructional methods, and evaluation modes. Each of those criteria were divided into aspects

that were further rated from one to six. A rating scale of 1 “does not meet any criteria” to 6 “consistently meets all criteria” was included. In the list of appendices (Appendix B), both the implemented checklist and the rating process were described in more details (Fondazione Intercultura, 2023; Pretti-Frontczak et al., 2008; “Regarding the Qualification Cycle,”2024).

3.4.1.2. Observation

Observations are widely regarded as one of the most commonly employed data gathering tools. By definition, observations refer to the way of collecting data wherein the researcher observes the behaviour of individuals or groups, watches events, or notes physical characteristics that occur in their natural setting (Tylor & Steele, 1996). Kumar (2011) added that observation is the most appropriate data collection instrument in research that requires exploring interactions in a group, ascertains the performed practices, or studies the behaviour of individuals. In fact, these three factors are the underlying rationales that influenced us to conduct an observation.

Therefore, executing an observation in this study stemmed from the need to closely examine teachers’ practices in the classroom. Through observation, we aim at investigating how teachers implement the OE syllabus in practice. Particularly, the researcher in this study focuses on the integration of the intercultural dimension in OE classes. Since the OE *Canevas* framework at the Department of English at LTU is flexible, our observation is directed toward investigating how teachers interpret and adapt the syllabus in their classes.

Moreover, the classroom observation intends to provide valuable insights into teacher-students interactions as well as other dynamic dimensions that are of importance in the current study. In short, performing a classroom observation was motivated by the need to develop a comprehensive understanding of the ways in which teachers apply the syllabus besides their expertise to accommodate the cultural perspectives in their instruction. In fact, having accurate

or full information about these three rationales could not be elicited by questioning, but rather by observation.

To capture these aspects, a combination of structured and unstructured observations was employed to focus on the predefined dimensions as well as to explore broader classroom dynamics. It is worth mentioning that the observation is of a non-participant type (as opposed to participant observation) in which the researcher is detached from actions of group (Kumar, 2011). Our non-participant observation was conducted overtly. By overt observation, we refer to the type of observations where those who are observed being aware of the presence of the observer (Taylor & Steele, 1996). As a matter of fact, conducting an overt observation was needed because of ethical considerations.

However, in order to eliminate the “Hawthorne Effect” where participants of the observation perform better when they know that they are observed and which is considered the main limitation of conducting observations beside being time-consuming, we positioned ourselves behind the participants so that we do not influence their behaviour. To get satisfactory findings, we properly planned our observation based on the procedure that was suggested by Taylor and Steele (1996) and Kumar (2011) in undertaking an observation. Therefore, the subsequent steps were carefully followed:

➤ **Determine the Focus**

The first step in planning the observation is thinking about the evaluation question(s) that the researcher wants to answer through observation. Therefore, few areas of focus have been selected for our data collection. As we mentioned earlier, these focus areas cover students-teacher interactions as well as teachers’ practices.

➤ **Design a System of Data Collection**

The second step in conducting an observation is to determine how the researcher collects the needed information. Actually, there are three ways of collecting observation data:

Recording sheets and checklists, observation guides, and field notes. Checklists are the most standardized way of collecting observation data. It includes both preset and free blanks for unstructured aspects.

Accordingly, we adopted a checklist that included predefined dimensions like class structure, content dealing with cultural and intercultural situations, meeting with different learning strategies and styles, materials, students-teacher oral interactions, communicative teaching, and the presence of the intercultural dimension (Appendix C). Detailed descriptors of the mentioned dimensions are rated on a rating scale of 1 to 5 (from 1 Never to 5 Always). Notably, the checklist includes a section to observe other aspects in relation to our interest.

➤ **Select the Sites**

In the third step, the researcher selects the sites that should be of adequate number to ensure that they are representative of the larger population and will provide an understanding of the situation that the researcher is observing (Kothari, 2004). As such, we have selected all the teachers of the OE module of second year at the Department of English at LTU. All of them were teaching 3 hours a week and their assigned groups contained 38 students. It is worth noting that the researcher was an OE teacher of similar groups; thus, two groups were excluded because they were part of the experiment.

➤ **Timing the Observation**

Timing the observation appropriately is of a paramount importance. One disadvantage of observations is that they are time consuming (Kumar, 2011). It took us one semester of observation during the academy year 2022-2023. As such, we observed the teaching practices of three OE second-year teachers.

3.4.1.3. Interview

In our study, an interview was administered to the experts at the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MESRS). These experts are the general inspections staff

whose names and contacts are available at the ministry webpage. Principally, interviews are one of the widely employed data collection tools. In essence, it is a goal-oriented interaction throughout which one person collects data from one or more entities (Kumar, 2022). In certain research situations, interviews are the most adequate data collection tools.

Specifically, interviews are the optimal techniques for gathering detailed information and are effective when the topic under study is complex. Moreover, interviews are potent in studies that involve describing the process by which phenomenon occur like how a person makes a decision (Kumar, 2022). Likely in our research, we conducted an interview for the purpose of describing the process by which educators at the macro level design syllabi and how they consider the suggestions made by researchers in Algeria in the area on interculturalities.

Therefore, we employed a semi-structured interview (Appendix D). Semi-structured interviews are data collection methods wherein the interviewer follows the flexible guide of open-ended questions. The flexibility of this type of interviews allows for spontaneous discussion and probing (Cohen et al., 2018). Kumar (2022) added that the flexibility of semi-structured interviews provides an opportunity for the researcher to discuss the subject matter in details with the freedom to probe.

There are various forms of conducting the interview, including personal interviews which are our preferred approach. They imply that the interviewer reads the questions to the respondent in face-to-face or remote setting and record the answers (Kumar, 2022). Revisiting the concept of semi-structured interviews, one should note that despite their advantages, they are time-consuming and need careful planning.

Subsequently, our procedure for administering the interview requires a deliberate planning. As such, we adapted the following comprehensive planning as suggested by Kumar (2022).

- **Preparing for the Interview.** In this phase, the researcher decides about the type of the interview and how the data are going to be recorded. At this stage, questions should be comprehensively and adequately planned. More importantly, the objectives should be maintained. Hence, we clearly outlined the questions for the experts and clarified the objectives behind conducting the interview.
- **Conducting the Interview.** In this stage of the process, the interviewer has to consider the following guidelines: Planning the time in advance, preparing a well-framed and clear questions, having a control over the interview, following unbiased approach, not indulging in any argument, and finally showing gratitude at the end of the interview (Appendix D).

3.4.2. Data Collection Instruments for the Explanatory Study

To collect numerical data, quantitative research tools were used. To begin with, an experiment was undertaken to test the effectiveness of TS materials on EFL learners under study. Furthermore, quantitative data were collected by means of questionnaires that were submitted to second-year students and teachers at the Department of English at LTU.

3.4.2.1. The Experiment

As a central element of our research design, the experiment played a crucial role in testing our hypotheses. It allows the researcher to compile empirical evidence that either supports or refutes the hypotheses. In other words, the main function of the experiment is to evaluate to which extent the hypotheses are true under controlled settings.

3.4.2.1.1. Description of the Experiment

The experimental design lies at the core of our explanatory study. It is intended to test our hypotheses, being the development of EFL learners' ICC through the implementation of TS. Considering our alternative hypothesis, one can easily note that it established a clear causality relationship between the DV and IV. In this respect, Smith (1991) claimed that the

experimental approach is the only method that addresses causality (cited in Cohen et al., 2007). Similarly, Saunders and his colleagues (2007) pointed out that the experimental design is based on establishing a causality link by directing the IV (the intervention) to drive change in the DV.

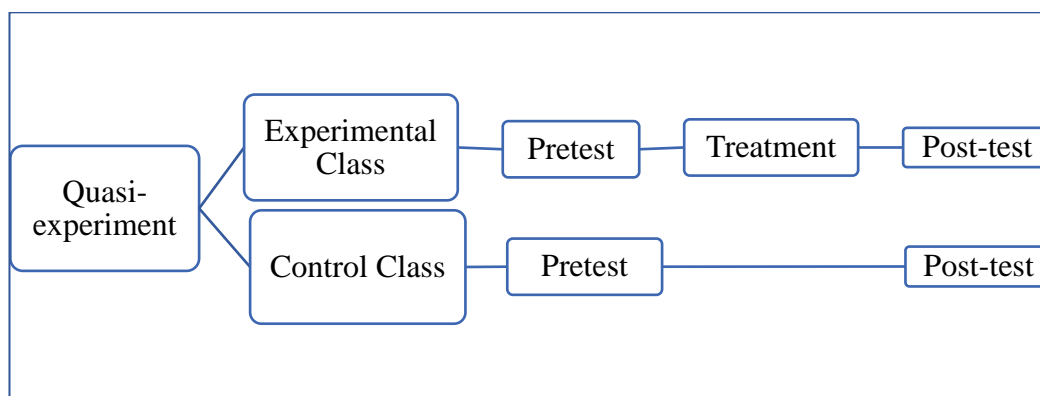
The type of the experimental design that was implemented in our inquiry is the quasi-experimental design (as shown in figure 3.1). Similar to experimental designs, a quasi-experiment is a research approach that is employed to estimate the causal impact of the teaching intervention (Kumar, 2011). Unlike true experiments, the quasi-experimental design lacks randomization (Cohen et al., 2007). This approach is commonly used in educational studies where random assignment to groups is impractical.

In conducting a quasi-experimental design, key components have to be included : the units of assignment, measurement of outcomes, and equally important the intervention (Shadish et al., 2002). These components are explained as follows:

- **Units of Assignment.** In a quasi-experimental design, non-randomized groups represented our units of assignment. They were, particularly, the EG (n=38) and the CG (n=38). Shadish and his colleagues (2002) mentioned that even without randomization, having a CG is remarkably effective in identifying the effect of the intervention.
- **Measurement of Outcomes.** Both the EG and the CG's performances were measured on specific outcomes. This was undertaken through utilizing tests that yielded numerical data. The use of tests aims at determining any significant change that may occur within the implementation of the treatment.
- **Intervention.** In the context of a quasi-experimental design, the intervention refers to the treatment that is being implemented to assess its effects on the participants (Kumar, 2011). Vitaly noted, the treatment was applied only to the EG.

Figure 3.1

The Quasi-Experiment with Non-equivalent Pretest/Post-test Control Group Design



Note. Rudibyam, 2019, p.2

The experiment was conducted over a period of one semester during the academic year 2022-2023. It unfolded for almost four months; it started on December 10th and ended in May 2nd. As previously referenced in this chapter (3.3.3. The Sample and Sampling Technique), the experiment was carried out on a sample of 76 second year students at the Department of English at LTU. The 76 units were allocated into two separate groups; the EG (n=38) and the control or comparison group (n=38).

Notably, the experimental study was conducted during the OE sessions. This implies that the classes met weekly for three hours that were divided into 2 sessions. The latter two had to be instructed in separate days of the week. With a simple numerical measure, we ascertain that the experiment took a period of 12 weeks that made the duration of the overall procedure spanned over 36 hours for each group.

It is crucial to note that both groups; the EG and the CG underwent a pretest, progress tests, and a post-test so as to examine the efficacy of the treatment (Kumar, 2011). In actual facts, the EG and the CG shared similar research aspects in order to create balanced groups with comparable baseline attributes. These aspects of similarity include their demographic features like age and gender, language proficiency, course time allocation, and the environment

or the setting (Shadish et al., 2002). However, the difference between the two groups was evident in the treatment as the EG received the teaching intervention through studying with TS materials and an intercultural-based syllabus, while the comparison group was taught through the traditional approach.

As mentioned before, through limiting the treatment to only the EG, the researcher could observe the effects of the implemented treatment. To isolate the specific effects of our treatment and, therefore, enhance the validity of our results, a placebo for the CG was used. Kumar (2011) mentioned that a placebo is an inactive procedure that is designed for the CG. He (2011) added that it resembles the treatment without containing its active component. Hence, we exposed participants in the CG to non-interactive single media materials.

3.4.2.1.2. The Pre-test

The pretest was administered to all participants in both the EG and the CG. It was performed during the first session of the experiment, on December 10th. By nature, the pretest is an assessment measure that is administered to participants before undergoing the treatment. Basically, the pretest aims at establishing a baseline to which the post-test results are compared, and examining the effect of the IV on the DV (Sharma & Nayar, 2020).

Therefore, a blended assessment tool was used to provide more comprehensive accounts of learners' ICC (Appendix E). It is adapted from the IC Assessment Project (Byram, 1997) and the INCA Project (CoE, 2003). The rating scale of the pretest was employed with values of 1-3-5 scale to respectively signify low, medium, and high level of intercultural proficiency among learners.

The pretest is composed of two parts. In the first part, students were exposed to a scenario-based interactive video wherein a couple splits the bill after taking lunch at the restaurant. The assessor, then, asked students to take roles by working in pairs. One student explained how splitting the bill is practical within the TC by providing arguments. The partner

was asked to express surprise over this cultural aspect by providing counter arguments. The second section of the pretest includes an interview that is intended to determine students' intercultural knowledge, intercultural skills, and intercultural attitudes (Appendix E). One should note that students' answers were recorded for the purpose of ensuring accuracy in the data analysis phase and, therefore, minimize misinterpretation.

3.4.2.1.2.1. Standardization of the Pretest

We established 14 dimensions for our pretest rating scales (Appendix F). The items were piloted and subjected to experimental validation tests to assess their validity and reliability. They were primarily subjected to factor analysis using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. Through the use of Factor Analysis, we could identify clusters of related items and illustrated whether they loaded into some expected factors. This kind of test enhances the pretest's validity and supports reliable baseline data.

Through performing factor analysis, the researcher considered the Eigen Value which measured the amount of variance in the data that were explained by each factor. Statistically speaking, factors with eigen value that register more than 1 are considered significant. Through examining the obtained results, the researcher can decide which factors to keep, retain, or integrate. Therefore, we could note via the total variances table that the 14 factors were extracted to 4 factors. The output table of component matrix clearly displays the loading of each variable (table 3.3).

Table 3.4*Factors Analysis, Component Matrix*

Component Matrix^a				
	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Openess		,928		
Adaptibility	,928			
Critical reflection	,928			
Discovering	,866			
Perspectives		-,377	,837	
Relating	,791		-,382	,315
Evaluation skills	,762		-,451	
Ethical stance	,757		,309	-,355
Explanation		,622		-,388
Interpreting	,929			
Mediating	,844			
Worldview			,809	
Respect	,378	,686		,495
Curiosity	-,355	,469		,509
Extraction Method : Principal Component Analyses				

The table (table 3.3) displays the correlation coefficients (loadings) between each variable. Higher loading (closer to +1 or -1) indicates that a variable is strongly associated with a particular component while a lower loading that is close to zero indicates weak association. Factor reduction variables that load highly on a single component should be grouped under that

component. For example, component one reflects qualities of adaptability, relating, discovering and mediating. These dimensions appear to reflect the intercultural skills which is the main factor that groups the mentioned items. Therefore, the 14 dimensions had to be clustered into 4 dimensions that are namely: Intercultural knowledge, intercultural skills, intercultural attitudes, and critical cultural awareness. The initial analytical rating scale (see appendix F) was accordingly adapted to a holistic rating scale (appendix G).

To measure the pretest's reliability, particularly the internal consistency reliability, a Cronbach's Alpha test was used. The Cronbach's Alpha value was applied to assess the internal consistency of a scale or a set of items (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). Hence, the following table was generated by an SPSS ver.25.

Table 3.5

Cronbach's Alpha Test for Pretest Items' Consistency

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
.869	14

The above table (table 3.4) highlights the calculated Cronbach's Alpha that registers (.869), which is reflected upon high value. The Alpha (.869) falls within the range (.7 to .9) which is considered good. Overall, an alpha of .869 demonstrated good internal consistency. For detailed analysis, another table was generated to show that most items contribute to the overall reliability.

Table 3.6*Items Consistency Contribution*

Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Ethical Stance	22,4000	96,884	,119	,883
Explanation	22,4000	86,358	,543	,859
Interpreting	22,9000	82,305	,733	,847
Perspectives	22,6000	97,516	,123	,881
Relating	22,8000	83,326	,674	,851
Mediating	22,7000	94,853	,239	,875
Discovering	23,0000	84,632	,761	,848
Adaptibility	23,3000	85,589	,850	,846
Curiosity	22,6000	94,147	,338	,868
Openess	23,3000	85,589	,850	,846
Respect	22,7000	95,274	,282	,871
Critical Reflection	23,3000	85,589	,850	,846
Worldview	23,0000	86,737	,653	,853
Evaluation Skills	22,8000	84,168	,637	,853

As seen in table 3.5, most items contribute to the internal consistency while few need review as they do not align with the set of items. This can be seen in the third column (correlation item-total correlation). Observing this part, one can note that just two items misalign with the other items which are “ethical stance” and “perspectives” that respectively register (.119) and (.123). Based on the results that we obtained, no removal of items was necessary. However, we needed to group them under main headings. As far as the difficulty value is concerned, we used a qualitative analysis through piloting for difficulty. This is mainly because the pretest was undertaken orally.

3.4.2.1.3. The Treatment Phase

The treatment phase overtook the experimental duration that extended over the overall period of 11 weeks (32 hours). The intervention was planned under the premise of intercultural learning. It is important to reiterate that the treatment was designated solely for the EG. That is to say, only the EG was taught through an interculturally-oriented syllabus with integrated TS materials. On the contrary, the CG was taught with the traditional method with the implementation of the placebo-controlled approach. The table below (table 3.6) presents an overview of the instructional intervention.

Table 3.7

An Overview of The Treatment Phase

Instructional Units	Aspects	Lessons' Focus	TS Materials	Date	Time	Place
Intercultural Knowledge	Of One's Self	-Knowledge of one's social group -Knowledge of similarities and differences	- <i>Star Wars</i> (The movie) - <i>Harry Potter</i> (Movie/book)	28/1/2023	1h30	R10
				31/1/2023	1h30	CR2
	Of the Others	-Understanding non-verbal cues in diverse cultures -Knowledge of misunderstanding • Progress Test / The Interview	- <i>Noblesse</i> (The webtoon) - <i>Lord of the Rings</i> (The movie/ Digital media)	4/2/2023	1h30	R10
				7/2/2023	1h30	CR2
				11/2/2023	1h30	R10
Intercultural Skills	Skills of Interpreting and Relating	-Analysing and interpreting cultural practices -Relating intercultural elements	- <i>Lord of the Rings</i> (The movie) - <i>Mulan</i> (Animated film)	14/2/2023	1h30	CR2
				19/2/2023	1h30	R10
	Skills of Discovery	-Managing cultural comparison -Adapt intercultural strategies • Progress Test / Interview	- <i>Bahubali</i> (The movie) - <i>Hunger Games</i> (The novel)	21/2/2023	1h30	CR2
				25/2/2023	1h30	R10
				28/2/2023	1h30	CR2
Intercultural Attitudes	Openess	-Engaging with other cultures	- <i>Twilight</i> (The movie)	14/3/2023	1h30	R10
				18/3/2023	1h30	CR2
	Curiosity	-Embracing Diversity -Respect for Cultural Differences -Willingness to relate • Progress Test/ Interview	- <i>Lord of the Rings</i> - <i>The Rocky Horror Show</i> (Digital media and social engagement)	8/4/2023	1h30	CR2
				11/4/2023	1h30	R11
				16/4/2023	1h30	R10
Critical Cultural Awareness	Analyse and evaluate cultural practices	-Reflection on own culture -Understanding cultural power dynamics	- <i>The Wire</i> (TV series) - <i>Black Panther</i> (Comic book) - <i>The Dark Night "13th"</i> (Documentary)	18/4/2023	1h30	CR1
				23/4/2023	1h30	R11
	Questioning stereotypes	-Empathy and social justice		25/4/2023	1h30	R11
				29/4/2023	1h30	CR1
				30/4/2023	1h30	R10

As previously stated, the treatment period was undertaken over the course of the second semester during which learners in the EG were engaged with transmedia narratives. The primary goal behind such instruction was to enhance their intercultural knowledge, intercultural skills, intercultural attitudes, and their critical cultural awareness. These intercultural components were explored by learners in authentic intercultural contexts.

Based on the four different components, the treatment was divided into four instructional chunks. The division of the instructional units was based on Bennett (1986) and Byram's (1997) models of Intercultural learning. After setting the instructional segments and identifying their aspects, we accordingly prepared lesson plans that corresponded to the predefined lessons' focus. It is worth mentioning that the treatment was designed with respect to the core content and orientation of the OE syllabus.

3.4.2.1.3.1. Instructional Unit One : Knowledge and Understanding

Intercultural knowledge sets at the heart of Byram's intercultural model (1997) that has become a significant framework in the field of EFL education. Notably, intercultural knowledge is the focus of the first instructional chunk. As stated earlier, it is mainly about deeply understanding one's culture and other cultures. Similarly, Bennett (1986) referred to this *savoir* as worldview.

Therefore, this unit aims at (a) developing students' awareness and understanding of one's own and others' assumptions, preconception, stereotypes, prejudices, and overt and covert discrimination. It also aims at (b) enhancing students' knowledge of the beliefs, values, practices, discourses, and products that may be used by people who hold a different cultural orientation. Within the same *savoir*, this instructional unit seeks to (c) cultivate students' understanding of verbal and non-verbal cues wherein cultural and societal individuals construct knowledge. By the end of this unit, students will subsequently (d) be aware that English as

lingua franca may express shared ideas or express the complete difference (Bennett, 1986; Byram, 1997).

Accordingly, the first session aims at boosting students to articulate self-awareness and recognition of their own cultural identities. Students were exposed to non-continued segments of *Star Wars* and asked to imagine an ending to them that might suit the Algerian context. This activity was followed by a mingle classroom in which students played different role so as to act as culture fans. Purposefully, students could identify themselves, and how they felt about themselves in a heterogeneous setting.

Further, the second session stresses on knowledge of others' culture. As such, the TS material *Harry Potter* (the movie and parts of the novel) was used. From the movie series, we selected Dumbledore's speech in order to align with the objectives of the OE *Canevas* and so as with all the planned lessons within our treatment. This session is further detailed in the coming table (table 3.6) that is included to exemplify how we worked on planning lessons.

Concerning the third session, it encompasses a webtoon that entails different cultural themes like wedding, festivals, as such, we used the famous *Noblesse*. Students were set in groups (jigsaw). Each group was asked to read a different section and students worked together to sketch it. As they finished, groups exchanged the manga to decode the sketch into a complete story. Each group, then, chose a representative to tell the story that they had got from the manga sketch while the other group representative told the original version to mark existing differences. This activity was followed by a classroom discussion.

The fourth session is divided into two parts. The first part is related to watching a video from the movie *Lord of the Rings*. In the while-listening activities, students answered questions that are related to their cultural understanding. Another activity was embedded to draw students' attention to convergence culture. They were provided with pieces of paper that contain fan comments and mingled in the classroom to find a partner who had a piece of paper

containing a quote from the book that goes with the comment (Comments were extracted from a real social media platform).

Table 3.8*Exemplary Lesson Plan*

Framework Stages	Time	Rationale	Procedure	Interaction Patterns
The Pre-listening Activity	10 Mns	To activate students' schematic knowledge.	Showing students a card of speaker's corner at the Hyde Park- London and ask them what it represents.	Plenary
The Listening Activities	45 Mns	-To develop students' knowledge of differences. -To develop students' understanding of verbal/non verbal cues in different cultural context.	-Asking students to watch <i>Dumbledore's</i> speech from <i>Harry Potter</i> to identify the patterns of the given speech. They are further asked to compare them with those in their culture. -Mingle Classroom: Students are divided into two large groups; one group has the papers that contain the key concepts and the other half has the quotes (from the book <i>Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban</i>) and ask them to mingle and find the correspondent answer.	Individual Work Group Work
The Post-Listening Activity	40 mns	To synthesize the acquired knowledge in context.	Each student is required to choose a theme and prepare a speech using <i>Dumbledore's</i> speech as a model.	Individual work

Note. Instruction Chunk One, Session Two

3.4.2.1.3.2. Instructional Unit Two : Intercultural Skills

We have previously mentioned that the division of the instructional units is based on Bennett (1986) and Byram's (1997) models of Intercultural learning. Subsequently, the second instructional segment aims at developing students' intercultural skills (skills of interpreting and relating, and skills of discovery and interaction). To clarify the course of the second instructional segment, two exemplary detailed sessions are explained below.

The first lesson aims at developing students' intercultural skills. Particularly, it aims at fostering students' skills of interpreting and relating of events and documents along with enhancing their skills of discovering new cultures. The lesson is divided into two parts. The first part contains four phases. A classroom discussion set at the beginning of the lesson; instructional scaffolding of key concepts (franchise/TS) was a prerequisite for this course. It was highly required to identify fans of the trilogy in the group.

In a Jigsaw reading, the synopsis of *The Hunger Games* was divided into two. Accordingly, students sit in a U-shaped setting so that they could form two groups facing each other. The first half had the opening and the other half had the ending part. Once students read their halves, they started mingling around the classroom so as to ask their partners about the missing part. At the end, all students could recount the whole story.

Then, students were asked to watch silent scenes from the movie *The Hunger Games* (the sounds of which were turned off) to identify what the characters were talking about. After guessing the topics, the sounds were turned on to check students' answers (a follow-up discussion about the importance of verbal and non-verbal communication). After that, students were asked about their own non-verbal communication and otherness as well. This activity included examples from different cultures.

In the second part of the lesson that was presented in another 1h30 session, students had to work on three activities. At first, they identified the themes that correspond with the

given quotes (culturally related themes). Then, students watched a non-ending scene of Katniss (the female protagonist) and were asked to imagine the situation starting like that: “If I were Katniss, I would...”. In the last activity, students were required to find national figures in their native culture that match the main characters of the story.

In another session, we have selected the animated movie *Mulan*. Within the same line of objectives, this session aims at (a) developing skills of interpreting and relating those entails developing new perspective through comparing and contrasting. It also aims at (b) enhancing learners’ skills of discovery and interaction: Recontextualization, and verbal/non-verbal communication.

Particularly, students in the first activity were provided with events and were asked to order them in the provided storyline. With the teacher’s guidance, students arrived to the full image of the story regardless of any cultural bias. The second activity took the form of a classroom discussion wherein students identified the two versions of the story : the Original Chinese Version and the Disney Version. In the third activity, students were required to distribute the given key concepts under two major headings (Disney Vs Chinese) using a Venn Diagram.

The last activity which is the production phase required students to be set in a situation wherein they found themselves obliged to replace one of their family members in the military. Girls had to mention the point of disguising themselves as men. In an oral production, students talked about a strenuous day they experienced there. At this stage, students were expected to make use of the cultural elements that they had encountered through interpreting the intercultural document *MuLan* and relate them to their own culture. Paying attention to students’ verbal and non-verbal communication was tremendously essential.

3.4.2.1.3.3. Instructional Unit Three : Intercultural Attitude

The third instructional unit is intended to (a) encourage learners to view cultural differences, and (b) to foster learners' empathy and ability to engage in meaningful intercultural interactions. It also aims at (c) encouraging learners to view cultural differences as opportunities for learning and growth. For better clarification, two exemplary sessions are provided to highlight the flow of this instructional unit.

Within the third instructional unit, the first session prolonged for 1h30, *The Lord of the Rings* has been used in the third instructional chunk to develop students' intercultural attitude. Particularly, it aims at enhancing students' openness, curiosity and empathy towards others. Activities varied around stereotypical depiction from texts and videos. The reuse of this transmedia narrative was motivated by the fame of *The Lord of the Rings* which is unparalleled in the realm of literature, cinema, and pop culture that captivates audience worldwide. Furthermore, all of the participants in the EG are fan of this franchise in general and of Peter Jackson's film trilogy in particular. For this session, three activities were carefully designed.

➤ Activity One

Instruction. Write four sentences reflection about the following characters. Use the clues in the box below.

Gandalf / Sam / Merry/ Pippin /Elf Legolas

1. Identify the character
2. His/her behaviour
3. The character's behaviour from a cultural perspective
4. Evaluating the behaviour

➤ **Activity Two**

Instruction. Watch the video(available on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HEJbozTn69s>) that displays the top five saddest moments of the Lord of the Rings movie, then, choose one scene that makes you feel emotionally-driven.

➤ **Activity Three (*Cross the Circle if* activity)**

- Ask participants to form a circle with one person in the middle.
- The person in the middle asks the other participants to cross through the circle if they can answer positively that they have, have done, or can do something in particular.
- If the other participants can answer the question positively, they must cross the circle and find an open spot on the other side left by someone else who also answered the question positively.
- The participant in the middle also finds a spot left open by someone who answered the question positively.
- A new person is left in the middle. This person gets to pick the new statement.

While watching/reading *The Lord of the Rings*,

- a. I consider characters' verbal and non-verbal communication.
- b. I sometimes cry over sad scenes
- c. I imagine that I am one of the characters and imagine full scenes.
- d. Differences exist but I believe in similarities....

The second exemplary session employed *Twilight* as the TS material. To activate students' schematic knowledge, they were asked about their knowledge about *Twilight*. This was followed by a collaborative activity in which students were asked to read, in pairs, a small part of the book that describes the line of events. Students, then, were asked to differentiate between human cultures and vampire cultures.

To address stereotyped assumptions, students were asked to list stereotypes that were portrayed in the scenes. The last activity adopts the Oxford Debate Style through which students were divided into ‘for’ and ‘against’ groups. It was a pre-requisite to mention, at the beginning of the activity, that Stephenie Meyer was harshly criticised for her anti-feminism ideologies. Further, students were given a motion to discuss if feminism is culturally accepted in their own culture. The debate aims at practicing their skills to accept differences and respect distinct values even if they don’t conform their own’s.

3.4.2.1.3.4. Instructional Unit Four: Critical Cultural Awareness

Critical Cultural Awareness is a core intercultural component of Byram’s model of ICC. It is considered the most advanced level of intercultural proficiency (Byram, 1997). As such, this final instructional chunk aims at (a) encouraging students to reflect on cultural values of both their local culture and the TC in an authentic intercultural setting. Of equivalent significance, the aim of the fourth unit targets (b) the development of students’ ethical intercultural engagement, and (c) addresses their social responsibility.

The first lesson in the fourth segment focuses on exploring urban American culture through *The Wire*. Students began by watching short clips or reading synopses that introduce key themes, such as systemic inequality, race relations, and the challenges of urban life in Baltimore. A class discussion followed wherein learners compared these issues to their own cultural contexts. In groups, students analysed a specific theme or character, such as the struggles within the education system or the moral complexities of *Omar Little*.

Within the same activity, students engaged with transmedia extensions, such as interviews with the show’s creator or related documentaries to deepen their understanding. Students, then, presented their findings. This activity aims at emphasizing how the narrative fosters empathy and appreciation for diversity. As a reflective activity, they wrote about the

stereotypes that they had depicted in the series and compared them to those in their own culture. This, in fact, promotes learners' intercultural awareness and non-judgmental perspective.

As part of this segment, the transmedia narrative of *Black Panther* was implemented to explore African heritage and global cultural representation. Students began by watching short clips, such as the coronation scene, so as to examine the blending of traditional African elements with futuristic themes. Through brainstorming, they discussed their perceptions of African cultures and the impact of media on those perceptions.

In groups, students analysed *Wakanda's* cultural symbolism using materials like excerpts from the comics or articles on Afrofuturism. As a creative task, students were asked to design cultural artifacts for *Wakanda* in which they incorporated elements from their own cultural backgrounds. The lesson ended with an oral presentation where students compared *Wakanda's* representation to their own cultural heritage. Purposefully, this oral production attempted to enhance students' curiosity, respect, and appreciation for diversity.

3.4.2.1.4. Progress Tests

A progress test is defined by Brown (2004) as a type of assessment that is designed for the purpose of evaluating learners' development over a period of time, and which is commonly aligned with a course or a curriculum. At the end of each instructional unit as shown in the previous table (table 3.7), students were assessed through a progress test (Appendix I). At the end of the first instructional chunk, students were assessed on their intercultural knowledge of their local culture and of others' cultures.

This assessment was undertaken through a written regular test. After exposing students to *The Hidden Fortress*, learners were asked to do two activities. The first one addresses learners' ability to identify verbal and non-verbal cues in the Japanese culture. To evaluate students' understanding of similarities and differences in intercultural situation, another activity

was designed in which students were asked to use a Venn Diagram to compare and contrast their own culture with another paired culture.

The second instructional chunk ended with the second progressive test that aims at testing students' intercultural skills. As such, students were given the following instruction: "You are in a multicultural group project. Someone makes a culturally biased statement. How do you respond?". To examine learners' openness, respect, and curiosity toward other cultures, a third test was designed in a form of scenario-based questions where learners had to choose the most respectful response to an intercultural situation.

The last progressive test aims at evaluating learners' ability to critically reflect on cultural differences and consider diverse perspectives. Learners were asked to choose a cultural document and evaluate it based on a checklist. The pretest's holistic rating scale was used for assessing students' performances in the progress tests. As previously mentioned, an embedded interview was employed at the end of each instructional unit with two students from the EG to explore their perceptions about the flow of the treatment so that refinements or adjustment can take place.

3.4.2.1.5. The Post-test

After the completion of the treatment, a post-test was administered to both the EG and the comparison group (Appendix J) for the purpose of measuring the effectiveness of the intervention. The American Psychological Association (APA) (2018) clarified that a post-test is an assessment that is conducted after the intervention, treatment, or other condition so as to measure any changes that have occurred. Moreover, the post-test is carried out in relation with the pretest to separate the effect of a variable of interest. This implies that both tests are undertaken under the same conditions. The obtained results from the post-test would be compared to those obtained prior to the treatment.

In line with the above conceptual basis, participants in both groups were post-tested on May 2, 2023 in order to investigate the effectiveness of TS in developing learners' ICC. It was undertaken after the treatment period in a regular session of the OE module. Similar to the pretest, the post-test was divided into two parts. In the first part, students were asked to perform a play about intercultural exchange event (The Global Village Café). The misunderstandings escalate: Intercultural knowledge, skills, attitudes, and students' critical cultural awareness. The second part involves an interview. It is important to mention that the play was video recorded, and the interview was audio recorded. The holistic rating scale that was established within the pretest was used to assess students' performances in the post-test.

3.4.2.2. The Questionnaires

A questionnaire as defined by Bryman (2016) is a structured data gathering tool that consists of a written list of questions. These series of questions are designed to collect answers from respondents. Unlike interviews, replies on questionnaires are recorded by the respondents themselves. In this regard, Kumar (2011) posited that the questionnaire should be clear and easy, sequenced, developed in an interactive style, and organized in a pleasant layout. This is mainly because the questionnaire administrator may not be present or at seen to explain the questions or address ambiguity.

Questionnaires have been widely used in educational studies for a number of reasons: (a) Questionnaires are effective data collection tools that allow the researcher to reach a large audience. Besides, (b) questionnaires are particularly useful in studies of experimental nature as they enable the researcher to collect baseline and post-treatment data, throughout which the researcher determines possible changes (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Moreover, (c) questionnaires can reduce the administrator's bias as well as encourage honest replies from the part of respondents by maintaining their confidentiality and anonymity (Cohen et al., 2018).

3.4.2.2.1. Description of the Questionnaires

Three questionnaires were outlined for the purposes of this study; each of them targets a specific aspect of the research. These questionnaires are, namely, teachers' questionnaire, students' entrance questionnaire, and students' attitude questionnaire. The three distinct mentioned questionnaires were administered at specific phases of the research.

3.4.2.2.1.1. Teachers' Questionnaire

As noted earlier, a questionnaire was administered to ten teachers at the Department of English at LTU. We have selected teachers who have previously engaged in the instruction of OE, or are currently teaching it as part of their professional practice. The questionnaires that are conducted through online platforms are easier to distribute, and provide automated data. Since we had limited opportunities to meet some of our respondents, we favoured online questionnaires that are effective in ensuring maximum participation.

The questionnaire (Appendix K) is intended to investigate teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of TS in developing students' ICC and their practices as far as intercultural teaching is concerned. Therefore, our questionnaire is divided into five sections that address the specific objectives of the study and seek to collect comprehensive data. The first section consists of five questions (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4, Q5) that aim at collecting general information about the respondents. The second section explores their perceptions toward culture and intercultural teaching. Accordingly, six questions (Q6, Q7, Q8, Q9, Q10, Q11) were designed.

A third section is followed to investigate teachers' specific perceptions towards the use of TS in EFL classes. It covers three questions (Q12, Q13, Q14). Following these sections, four questions (Q15, Q16, Q17, Q18) formulate the questionnaire's core section which targets gathering data about teachers' perceptions towards TS and ICC development. The last section constitutes four open-ended question (Q19, Q20, Q21, Q22) that focus on collection data about teachers' perspectives.

3.4.2.2.1.2. Students' Entrance Questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered to the EG and the CG during the pre-experimental phase. The pre-experimental questionnaire aims at gathering baseline data about participants' schematic knowledge, experience, and perceptions toward intercultural learning. As mentioned earlier, the questionnaire was administered to second-year students at the Department of English at LTU who participated in the EG (n=38), and the CG (n=38). The questionnaire features 23 questions that are divided into four sections (Appendix L).

Section one comprises five questions (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4, Q5) that address students' biodata information. Specifically, these are questions about students' gender, English proficiency, English courses, and their familiarity with multimedia software. Concerning the second section, four questions have been established (Q6, Q7, Q8, Q9). The section targets gathering data about students' perception towards the nexus of language and culture. particularly, it focuses on the interrelatedness of language and culture and the integration of culture in EFL classrooms.

As far as section three is concerned, five questions (Q11, Q12, Q13, Q14, Q15) were administered to target students' perceptions towards integrating the intercultural dimension in the OE syllabus to develop learners' ICC. The last section of the questionnaire includes eight questions (Q16, Q17, Q18, Q19, Q20, Q21, Q22, Q23). This section focuses on integrating TS in orality-based EFL classrooms to enhance learners' ICC. The last question (Q23) is an open-ended question that invites participants to write further suggestions about ways they believe are effective in developing learners' ICC.

The informants' replies on the overall list of questions provided the researcher with valuable data about students' perception towards our study's focus. They also provide insights about students' readiness and willingness to take part in the experiment. It is important to note that the students' entrance questionnaire was conducted through real-time interaction.

3.1.2.2.1.3. Students' Attitudinal Questionnaire

An attitudinal questionnaire was designed at the end of the experiment to capture the EG and the CG's attitudes at the end of the experimental phase. Specifically, this questionnaire aims at exploring learners' shifts in attitudes towards ICC and TS by comparing obtained data from both the EG and the CG. Our post-experimental questionnaire uses five points Likert scale items, ranging from "*strongly agree*" to "*strongly disagree*" (Appendix M). There are 18 included items to which respondents express their perceptions.

The three questionnaires were designed in a framework that guided respondents so that we could ensure that the collected data is relevant and organized. Moreover, an informed consent statement was written on the top of the questionnaire to assure respondents of their anonymity, address their ethical considerations, and state the purpose of the questionnaire.

3.4.2.2.2. Piloting the Questionnaires

In this study, the questionnaires were piloted with a small representative group. The process of piloting the questionnaires was conducted to ensure both its validity and its reliability.

3.4.2.2.2.1. Validity of the Questionnaires

To pilot the questionnaires for validity, we administered them to a small group of participants before distributing it on full scale. This step is highly required for the purpose of subjecting the questionnaires to initial testing, and to ensure that it measures what it is intended to assess (Cohen, et al., 2018).

Bryman (2016) pointed out that piloting the questionnaire addresses the following areas: Content validity, face validity, and construct validity. First, content validity is about ensuring the relevance of all the questions. Concerning face validity, it aims at confirming the relevance and clarity of the questions. Finally, construct validity is intended to determine whether the questions measure what it intends to measure.

Therefore, we administered the questionnaires to the selected samples of teachers and students at the Department of English at LTU. We ensured that the selected two teachers have a good experience with the teaching of OE as well as research methodology. The respondents were asked to consider the following aspects: Clarity of questions, relevance and content validity, response format, and time and feasibility (Bryman, 2016). The questionnaire pilot study helped review the teachers' questionnaire. As a result, no need of refinement for the teachers' questionnaire was required. Reviewing students' questionnaire, however, required some refinement as the pilot study sample noted that some questions sound similar.

3.4.2.2.2. Reliability of the Questionnaires

In piloting the questionnaire, another concern should be considered by the researcher, which is the reliability of questions. Actually, this involves testing its internal consistency to measure whether the designed items can produce consistency in replies and responses. In this respect, the reliability metrics Cronbach's Alpha was utilized to assist internal consistency of the items. Upon measuring the Cronbach's Alpha value, we found that the reliability coefficient registers 0.91, indicating excellent internal consistency among the items.

3.5. Data Analysis Procedures

In research, data analysis is a critical component that provides meanings to the obtained results. Without rigorous data analysis, the research risks being anecdotal, unreliable, and inconclusive (Babbie, 2020). The process of data analysis is generally described as the critical phase of the research (Creswell, 2014). Notably, data analysis involves a systematic examination and an accurate interpretation of the collected data in earlier stages for the aim of drawing conclusions, answering research questions, and testing hypotheses.

3.5.1. Analysis of Qualitative Data

Gathering qualitative data were established at the outset of our research paradigm. Therefore, a document analysis and a non-participant observation were undertaken as the first

sequence of our research. Data from document analysis and the observation were analysed and interpreted carefully for the purpose of validating the present problem, the research questions, and the hypotheses. Using a checklist within the document analysis tool, the researcher could identify the required patterns and organized them into a coding scheme that facilitated the interpretation of the extracted findings.

In later stages, an experts' interview was conducted to answer the first research question. To ensure a systematic and structured analysis of the interview, some steps were applied. The first step involves a transcription of the recorded data to capture the respondents' exact words. This step was followed by a good reading of the transcripts so that the researcher becomes familiar with the data. Most importantly, a coding scheme was developed to present key themes, concepts, and categories. Following this step, the developed coding scheme was applied to the data so that familiar themes and patterns were easily grouped. Qualitative analysis and interpretation of the themes were considered and finally reported (Charmaz, 2014)

3.5.2. Analysis of the Quantitative Data

Quantitative data that features the pretest, progress tests, post-test, teachers' questionnaire, students' entrance questionnaire, and students' attitude questionnaire were analysed using SPSS, excel, R, and Stata. By employing them, we conducted the following:

- ***Granular Descriptive Statistics.*** A statistical description is used over all the phases of testing to summarize and describe data so that the results are adequately processed for statistical analyses.
- ***Cronbach's Alpha Test.*** This statistical test is employed to measure both the questionnaires' internal consistency and the pretest's items consistency. Running a Cronbach's test is essential to ensure the research instruments' reliability.
- ***T-tests.*** A t-test is employed so as to measure whether potential differences in means are statistically significant. To compare the means of the EG and the CG within the

same test, an independent sample t-test is conducted. However, a Paired samples T-test (Dependent T-test) is conducted to compare means from the same group at two different time points (Pretest and Post-test).

- ***Levene's Test.*** The progress tests' results are subjected to Levene's test. This type of test is required prior to running MANOVA test. It aims at testing the homogeneity of variance.
- ***Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA).*** Since we have multiple dependent variables (the different aspects of ICC), and we seek to investigate the impact of the intervention across the variables, a MANOVA test is used. It is important to note that it was not possible to apply Mixed ANOVA Test because it would lead to statistical errors (type 1 error).
- ***Chi-square Test.*** In order to verify that the differences between the EG and the CG in the results of the students' questionnaires are statistically significant, a Chi-square test is employed.
- ***Correlation Analysis (Pearson Correlation r).*** Correlation analysis measures the strength of the relationship between variables. In the context of this study, Pearson correlation measures the relationship between students' ICC and the scores that reflect their oral expression's performance.

3.6. Ethical Considerations

At the simplest level, research ethics refer to the principles that have to be considered to guarantee that the study is responsibly and safely conducted (APA, 2020). More specifically, research ethics help safeguard the research stakeholders' rights and welfare. This is, in fact, a critical issue that ensure the credibility of the research findings (British Educational Research Association, 2018). In our research, ethical issues were highly valued in all phases of the study. Prioritizing participants' rights, including the researcher, pervaded throughout all the research

procedures, from obtaining the document to conducting the observations, questionnaires, experiment, and interview. We believed that adhering to ethical factors is an indispensable part of making research.

3.6.1. Informed Consent

Seeking respondents' informed consent is crucial in research. Kumar (2011) noted that it is an unethical practice when a researcher obtained information without the knowledge or willingness of the participants. In this respect, we consented participants' fully-informed assent prior to any participatory move. Therefore, we requested the head of the Department's consent in order to get the OE *Canevas* (Appendix N). Moreover, we obtained the observed teachers' consent (Appendix O). Arranging the meeting with the MESRS supervisor was done through emailing them in which we asked for their approval to the interview. Vitally noted, all the letters were primarily approved and signed by the supervisor.

3.6.2. Confidentiality and Anonymity

According to Kumar (2011), maintaining respondents' confidentiality and anonymity should be ensured. As a matter of fact, keeping stakeholders' anonymity fosters trustworthiness and encourages honest participation that would subsequently improve the quality of data. To enhance confidentiality in our research, we used code identifiers in collecting quantitative data and obtained explicit consent within qualitative data.

3.6.3. Avoiding Bias

Introducing bias into a research activity is considered an unethical act. Actually, bias entails hiding the true findings or highlighting something unsuitably (Kumar, 2011). Therefore, we attempted to ensure that bias was prevented at different levels.

➤ ***Bias in Study Design.*** To avoid bias in study design, we used a comparison group.

Additionally, we implemented consistent materials, and conditions for both the

experimental group and the control group, except for the variable under investigation (TS).

- ***Bias in Data Collection.*** To ensure unbiasedness in data collection, we, first, confirmed that the questionnaires are neutral; that is to say, there was no use of leading or suggestive language. Furthermore, we prepare a structured checklist prior to conducting the observation so as to reduce the observer's bias. A triangulation of data was also applied to reduce reliance on a single data source.
- ***Bias in Interpretation.*** Employing a blind analysis (Kumar, 2011) in interpreting data reduced confirmation bias. The former embeds that the researcher analyses data without knowing which group to avoid. Moreover, the interpretation of the data was collaboratively reviewed; the inspector went through the process of reviewing the interpretation of the data.
- ***Bias in Reporting.*** To bypass bias in reporting the findings, we were ready to report even null and unexpected findings. Moreover, we noted all the limitations that were identified. By addressing the above-mentioned aspects, the credibility of the research could be enhanced and, thus, our findings can contribute to the field of ICC in EFL context.

Conclusion

This chapter yielded a detailed outline of our research methodology design that is employed to investigate the efficacy of TS in developing learners' ICC in an EFL context. It featured research paradigm, as well as the researchers' philosophy about the framework that best addresses the research questions. In this chapter, specifying the population and the sampling techniques were described. It is, then, deemed necessary to thoroughly explain the data collection methods that were triangulated to address our research questions, test our hypotheses and, thus, achieve the study's aim. This could not be completed without giving an

account to data analysis procedures. Finally, ethical issues have been attentively addressed to ensure the research process' integrity. In short, the adopted methodological approach that aligns with the nature of our current study established a clear foundation for the concern of the subsequent chapter that will, in turn, focus on data analysis and interpretation.

Chapter Four: Analysis and Interpretation of the Findings

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Introduction

To derive comprehensive insights and bridge the collected data with the research aim, in-depth analyses and interpretations of the findings are unquestionably required. Accordingly, this chapter endeavours to methodically present the data and critically analyse and interpret them. In executing this, the chapter seeks to elicit underlying patterns, to manipulate variables' relationships, and to provide straightforward answers to our research questions.

The current chapter unfolds in two sections, corresponding to the exploratory phase and the explanatory phase. The exploratory phase presents findings of the document analysis, teachers' observations, and experts' interview. Their analyses and interpretations are structured to both validate our research gap and insightfully answer the first and the second research questions.

The explanatory phase is subsequently outlined in the second section of the chapter in which results of the questionnaires, the pretest, the progress tests, and the post-test are thoroughly discussed. In this vein, quantitative data that were gathered from our sample subjects and analysed by means of statistical testing are provided. Therefore, the second section is regarded as the sturdy ground of our research wherein research hypotheses are tested and valid answers to the third and fourth research questions are communicated.

4.1. Findings of the Exploratory Study

As previously highlighted in the third chapter, three research instruments were utilized within the preliminary exploratory study. In this regard, a document analysis, an observation, and an interview with the MESRS inspectors were employed. Therefore, this section offers a full analysis and discussion of the data generated by the mentioned instruments.

4.1.1. Document Analysis

To answer our first research question, a document analysis was used wherein an evaluation of the OE syllabus for second-year students at the Department of English at LTU was, accordingly, performed. As previously stated, we conducted a syllabus evaluation rubric for document analysis (Appendix B) to evaluate the OE syllabus' structure, objectives, design, and most importantly its intercultural load. Therefore, the data gathered from the syllabus evaluation need to be analysed to mainly evaluate the integration of the intercultural dimension in the OE syllabus.

While evaluating the OE syllabus, we followed a combination of the content analysis approach so as to assess whether or not the syllabus is interculturally-oriented, together with the critical approach that intends to explore the gap and the areas that need improvements. Hence, the syllabus was evaluated in a linear manner, using the predefined coding criteria (Appendix B) in order to ensure a comprehensive analysis of its components.

4.1.1.1. Findings of the Syllabus Evaluation

Upon applying the syllabus evaluation rubric for document analysis, we were able to generate the following results (table 4.1). To ensure a comprehensive analysis, we organize the criteria into separate tables for a thematic classification and an in-depth evaluation. Therefore, the following table groups the aspects that are related to the content's sequence, relevance, and focus.

Table 4.1*Syllabus Evaluation Rubric: Time 1*

Criteria	Aspects	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Logical Sequence and Organization of Content	Content is logically sequenced throughout the course Duration	1	(2)	3	4	5	6
	Syllabus is organized by units with specific topics that are distributed over weeks.	(1)	2	3	4	5	6
	Content is appropriate in scope for instructional hours.	1	(2)	3	4	5	6
2 Content Relevance of Objectives	Content aligns with the syllabus objectives and are planned to achieve the course objectives	1	2	(3)	4	5	6
	A combination of both language-based learning and skills-based learning	1	2	(3)	4	5	6
	Course content supports the development of intercultural communication skills	(1)	2	3	4	5	6
	Activities are interculturally-oriented	(1)	2	3	4	5	6
	Activities include experiential learning and real-life contexts	1	(2)	3	4	5	6
	Instructional practices support students' intercultural needs and goals	(1)	2	3	4	5	6
	A variety of intercultural daily events are integrated	1	(2)	3	4	5	6
3 Content Type and Focus	Amalgam of language-based, skills-based, and learning-based content	1	(2)	3	4	5	6
	Content prepares learners for daily life, traditions, and living conditions	1	(2)	3	4	5	6
	Content targets social conventions, such as meeting etiquette	(1)	2	3	4	5	6

The table above details the evaluation rubric that we implemented in our analysis of the three connected criteria in relation to the syllabus content, which are namely: Logical Sequence and Organization of Content, Content Relevance of Objectives, and Content Type and Focus. These criteria were further divided to aspects. Each aspect within these criteria is rated on a scale of 1 “doesn’t meet any criteria” to 6 “meets all the criteria”. As illustrated in the table, most of the ratings range between 1 and 2. The findings indicate that the OE syllabus at the Department of English at LTU poorly aligns with the predefined criteria.

Specifically, no clear progression of sequences is provided. Despite the fact that the syllabus covers a diverse range of topics, like paraphrasing skills, vocabulary building, public speaking, and speeches in different occasions, the organization of the items are inadequate. For

example, topics like “*Types of Oratory Speaking*” are introduced prior to building foundational skills. Similarly, the aspects that are part of the Content Relevance of Objectives fall between 1, 2, and 3. This indicates that the syllabus does not sufficiently meet the expected standards.

Particularly, the syllabus has a limited integration of both language-based learning and skill-based learning. In addition to that, it fails at incorporating the intercultural element that is needed for interaction. While some elements, such as occasional speeches, address the cultural aspect of language, the absence of activities that enhance the intercultural communication is remarkable. As far as the content focus is concerned, a low rating in these areas suggests that the syllabus overtly focuses on skill-based elements, like “*Public Speaking*”, and “*Types of Oratory*” with limited practical applications.

Upon evaluating the syllabus on Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity, Cultural Knowledge, and Cultural Integration, valuable results were reached (Table 4.2). they are provided as follows:

Table 4.2

Syllabus Evaluation Rubric: Time 2

Criteria	Aspects	1	2	3	4	5	6
4 Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity	Content addresses values, beliefs, and attitudes of the target culture	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Content supports a deep understanding of sensitivity to otherness	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Content focuses on verbal communication skills	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Content equally emphasizes non-verbal communication, such as body language, and facial expressions	1	2	3	4	5	6
5 Cultural Knowledge - History, Geography, Literature, Art, and Music	The course introduces students to historical, geographical, literary, and artistic aspects of the target culture	1	2	3	4	5	6
	The course material includes an exposure to art, music, and cultural expressions	1	2	3	4	5	6
6 Cultural Integration	Integrates both home culture and foreign culture to cultivate intercultural understanding	1	2	3	4	5	6
	A clear focus on integrating the intercultural dimension	1	2	3	4	5	6

As shown in the above table (4.2), the majority of the scores range from 1 to 2. Hence, the OE syllabus of second-year at the Department of English at LTU falls short regarding the intercultural load. As far as Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity is concerned, the syllabus' content includes topics such as “*Speech Delivery*” and “*Public Speaking*”; therefore, no explicit presence of content that is related to values, beliefs, or attitudes of the target culture is mentioned. While general communication skills are covered, there's no specific emphasis on culturally-oriented communication styles.

The seventh and eighth criteria in the evaluative rubric are established to assess the compatibility of the content with both learners' needs and instructors' expectations (table 4.3).

Table 4.3

Syllabus Evaluation Rubric: Time 3

Criteria	Aspects	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 Compatibility with Learners' Needs and Expectations	Content matches learners' level	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Syllabus builds on learners' schematic knowledge to attain new learning objectives	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Clarifying learners' prior knowledge and identifying the course expected outcomes.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8 Instructor's Expectations and Alignment	Content aligns with the instructor's expectations and objectives for the course	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Content supports the instructor in conveying complex intercultural topics	1	2	3	4	5	6

As seen in the above table (table 4.3), the content of the OE syllabus at the Department of English at LTU partially meets learners' expectation and need. The previously mentioned requires a content that meets learners' level and builds on their schematic knowledge. Regarding the last aspect, no guidance is provided for instructors to address learners' ICC development. Further aspects are introduced in the next table (table 4.4).

Table 4.4*Syllabus Evaluation Rubric: Time 4*

Other Dimensions		Aspects	1	2	3	4	5	6
9	Objectives	Objectives are interculturally-oriented and support ICC	①	2	3	4	5	6
		Objectives reflect on learners' intercultural behaviours	①	2	3	4	5	6
		Objectives target intercultural interactions and global communication	①	2	3	4	5	6
		Objectives align both local and global perspectives	①	2	3	4	5	6
		Objectives encourage recognition of self and one's culture through others' perspectives	①	2	3	4	5	6
10	Teaching Methods	The syllabus consists of diverse teaching methods for assessing students' progress	1	②	3	4	5	6
		Methods facilitate engagement with cultural differences	1	②	3	4	5	6
		Methods support dialogue, reflection, and alternative paradigms of learning	1	2	③	4	5	6
		Use of technology and social media for global dialogue and exposure to multiple viewpoints	1	2	③	4	5	6
11	Evaluation Mode	Evaluation materials are authentic, interculturally-driven, and unbiased.	1	②	3	4	5	6
		Evaluation procedures assess students' intercultural competences	①	2	3	4	5	6
		Evaluation outcomes describe students' competencies and highlight program planning	1	2	③	4	5	6
		Multiple forms of learning evidence are used.	1	2	③	4	5	6

The final three dimensions are explicitly identified as: Objectives, Teaching Method, and Evaluation Mode. Across all the aspects that are under the dimension Objective (table 4.4), there is an indication of serious deficiencies regarding the alignment of the objectives with the development of learners' ICC. In analysing the OE syllabus, we noted that the objectives do not reflect the intercultural dimension or any global communication needs. This can be easily seen in the low rating within the objectives that report "1" on the scale for all the aspects.

Despite the fact that the syllabus includes generic skills, particularly public speaking and vocabulary building, it remarkably neglects the intercultural dimension. It is important to note that the teaching method complicated our evaluation process. This is because there is no clear guidance or statement that highlights the teaching method in the OE syllabus. The few

hints that we found in the syllabus shows no evidence for integrating culture in the syllabus. Clearly, a limited diversity in methods was heavily noted. Moreover, the struggle continued as the only existing evaluation modes are mixed sources from outer documents. This, in fact, leads to a lack of authenticity as far as evaluating learners' performances is concerned.

4.1.1.2. Interpretation of the Syllabus Evaluation Results

Conducting a syllabus evaluation rubric for document analysis on the OE *Canevas* unveils remarkable shortcomings in its design, implementation, and its compatibility with ICC development. Despite the fact that the syllabus integrates features of verbal and non-verbal communication skills, it disregards focal dimensions that are highly required in fostering intercultural learning. Upon analysing the results, a comprehensive interpretation of the findings is necessitated so that the results become meaningful.

Particularly, the OE syllabus under evaluation, while ambitious in scope, fails to meet EFL learners' needs in today's globalized world. There is an overt emphasis on generic communication skills with no integration of the intercultural dimension. The results on the scales indicate the absence of clear interculturality-based objectives, the low ratings in the other dimensions as well including content, teaching methods, and evaluation further exacerbate these shortcomings. The evaluation of the syllabus for document analysis, when linked to theoretical frameworks, highlights remarkable gaps in both its design and intercultural load.

Our findings indicate the syllabus' deficiencies in conforming to key theories in language education, especially those related to syllabus design and intercultural communication. For the syllabus' objectives, they are not interculturality-infused. Similar studies, including two prominent ones that were conducted by Byram (2008) and Fantini (2009), found that many EFL courses' objectives focus on developing learners' linguistic skills, and fail to incorporate the intercultural objectives.

Moreover, the syllabus does not seem to integrate dynamic teaching methods that would expose learners to intercultural challenges which Bennett (2009) insisted on for educators to implement. It is mentioned in chapter one that Deardorff (2006) emphasized the importance of authentic assessment in evaluating the intercultural competence. To be consistent with this body of literature, it is crucial to highlight that current evaluation methods in second-year OE syllabus at the Department of English at LTU does not account for assessing learners' ICC.

In the context of Algerian universities, several research efforts have recently focused on ICC and the importance of integrating it in EFL courses. However, few of them based their studies on an exhaustive analysis and evaluation of the existing courses. We believed that Mizab's doctoral thesis (2020) that aims at exploring the process of interculturalizing the EFL curriculum in Algeria is the most significant and the most related. Similar to our study, she (2020) carried out a systematic evaluation of the OE *Canevas* at the Department of English at Batna University. The results revealed that language policies both at the macro and micro level fail to emphasize the intercultural dimension as an essential component of language education. Moreover, professor Rahmani (personal communication, Oct, 2024) noted that, as part of a study that she (2024) conducted for the international conference on teaching culture (LTU, 2024), English syllabi at the Department of English at Saida University across all the modules lack appropriate integration of ICC.

Therefore, our findings reflect patterns that are similarly seen in other studies which are namely: Lack of intercultural based objectives, insufficient cultural content, non-authentic evaluation modes and teaching methods that would promote intercultural learning. Exposing learners to likewise syllabus leads to hindering their development to effectively and appropriately engage in an intercultural interaction. These gaps reinforce the need for shift in policymaking towards prioritising ICC in EFL syllabi.

The findings from the document analysis directly address our first research questions that is concerned with whether policymakers and stakeholders account for the importance of integrating the intercultural dimension in EFL syllabi. Based on the analysis of the results, it is apparent that ICC is not sufficiently integrated into second-year OE syllabus at the Department of English at LTU. While the analysis provides valuable insights and validates our research gap, the findings are limited by scope of the document reviewed.

4.1.2. Teachers' Observation

Since the OE *Canevas* under study does not refer to the teaching methods which makes them open to teachers' own perspectives and interpretations, a semi-structured observation was conducted during the exploratory preparatory phase to establish a baseline understanding of teachers' practices. It further aims at validating our research gap through examining whether or not OE teachers of second-year at the Department of English at LTU implement the intercultural dimensions in their EFL classes.

In this respect, a classroom observation checklist of ICC was utilized (Appendix C). Previous studies in the field of EFL education employed observations to examine how teachers integrate ICC into their practices. Conducting classroom observations, researchers (like Mizab, 2020; Schwarzenhal et al., 2020) arrived at rich and contextual insights regarding the integration of ICC in EFL education. After getting our observants' consent (appendix O), we started our observation that yielded valuable data

4.1.2.1. Findings of the Observations

4.1.2.1.1. Observation of the First Teacher (T001)

Upon performing The Classroom Observation Checklist of Intercultural Teaching during our seven-session observations of T001, the gathered data were summarized in the following table (table 4.5). it is important to note that each observed and attended session spanned over a period of 1h30.

Table 4.5

Observation of T001

Dimensions	Descriptors	T001 OE Observed Sessions						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7 (Quiz)
Interaction Patterns	Plenary	√+	√+	√+	√+	√+	√+	/
	Individual	√	√	√	√	√	√	/
	Pair	X	X	X	X	X	X	/
	Group	X	X	X	X	X	X	/
Content Dealing with	Cultural Diversity/ Local and Target Culture	Φ	Φ	X	√	X	X	/
	Cultural/ Intercultural Issues	X	X	Φ	X	X	X	/
	Intercultural Barriers	X	Φ	X	X	X	X	/
	Authentic Intercultural Situations	X	X	X	X	X	X	/
Story-based Teaching	Narratives	√	√	√	X	X	X	/
	Storytelling	X	X	√	X	X	X	/
	Transmedia Stories	X	X	√	X	X	X	/
Meeting different learning strategies and styles	Visual	X	X	√	X	+	Φ	/
	Auditory	√+	X	√	Φ	√+	√	/
	Read/Write	Φ	+	X	X	+	+	/
	Kinaesthetic	X	X	X	X	X	X	/
Materials	The use of Technology	Φ	X	+	X	X	X	/
	Narrative texts	Φ	X	X	X	X	X	/
	Multi-media	X	X	X	X	X	X	/
	Cultural Materials	X	X	√	X	X	X	/
	Intercultural Materials	X	X	√	X	X	X	/
Communicative Teaching	Utilizing Real-World Situations	√	+	Φ	Φ	√	+	/
	Contextualising Language	√	√	√	X	Φ	√	/
	Oral Communication	√+	√	+	+	X	√	/
	Integration of Language Skills	Φ	√	Φ	Φ	X	√	/
	Students' Engagement	√	√+	√	√	Φ	√+	/
	Meaningful Inputs/Outputs	+	√+	Φ	+	√	√+	/

Note. X Never Φ Sometimes √ Frequently

+ Frequently +

√+ Always

As shown in the above table (table 4.5), different aspects across the established dimensions were considered while observing T001 within the seven sessions. Concerning the Interaction Patterns, most of the instructions were undertaken plenary to have a simultaneous output from all the class towards the teacher's input. However, some activities were assigned to the students to be answered individually with a follow-up discussion. It is important to note that no pair/group work was structured during the whole phase of the observations. This resulted in having a mono-teaching mode that heavily relied on student-teacher interaction which suggests a limited variety in collaborative engagement.

In terms of Content, there was a low focus on the cultural/intercultural issues. Cultural Diversity was "frequently" addressed in session four wherein a student presented her exposition. However, all the other aspects under the heading Content, along with Cultural Diversity, were absent in nearly all the sessions. When it comes to story-based teaching, narratives were "frequently" used in the first three sessions, but they were absent thereafter. TS was "frequently" used only once in session three when one of the students incorporated TS in her oral presentation as she had chosen *Butterfly Effect* as her based material. Notably, her choice was not influenced by the teacher.

Based on the findings of T001 observations, one can note that the sessions were planned with a dominance of the auditory learning strategy. Auditory strategies were used more consistently, appearing "always" in sessions one and five, and "frequent" in sessions three and six. The visual learning strategies were narrowly integrated; they present themselves as "frequently" in session three and "frequently plus" in session four. Read/write strategies were barely observed in the sessions. Kinaesthetic strategies, however, were completely neglected, they were "never" implemented which revealed a potential gap in covering diverse learner needs.

Regarding Materials, there was limited range of resources. Technology materials were used “sometimes” in session one through audio recordings. The few times where multi-media materials were used were in the sessions in which learners presented their expositions, appearing “frequently” in session three and “frequently+” in session five. Within the same line of session three, we observed the only use of cultural and intercultural materials that were “never” employed in all other sessions.

As far as Communicative Teaching is concerned, we focused on some key practices. As shown in the table (table 4.5), utilizing real-world situations and contextualizing language were observed “frequently” in the majority of sessions, although there were variabilities. Oral communication was remarkably featured in sessions one, two, three, and six, but absent in the fifth session. The integration of language skills and students' engagement was noticeable, marking "frequent" to "always" in all but one session. Similarly, meaningful inputs and outputs were evident, ranging from "frequent" to "always" in most of the sessions.

Since the Evaluation Method was vaguely stated in second-year OE *Canevas* at the Department of English at LTU, the sixth and final session aimed at providing sufficient understanding of how evaluation is processed in their EFL classes. Therefore, an unstructured observation was conducted within the quiz session (session seven). In this session, T001 relied on a ready-made proficiency Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) test that evaluated students' listening with minimal interaction.

4.1.2.1.2. Observation of the Second Teacher (T002)

To increase objectivity and cross verify the findings, we simultaneously conducted the same observation with T002. Similar to T001 observation, the designed Classroom Observation Checklist of Intercultural Teaching was employed. Upon conducting the observation, the following field notes table (table 4.6) provides an overview of T002 practices across multiple sessions.

Table 4.6*Observations of T002*

Dimensions	Descriptors	T002 OE Observed Sessions				
		1	2	3	4	5 (Quiz)
Interaction Patterns	Plenary	√	√+	√+	√	/
	Individual	√+	Φ	√+	√	/
	Pair	Φ	X	Φ	√	/
	Group	X	√+	X	√	/
Content Dealing with	Cultural Diversity/ Local and Target Culture	Φ	Φ	Φ	X	/
	Cultural/ Intercultural Issues	X	Φ	X	X	/
	Intercultural Barriers	X	X	X	X	/
	Authentic Intercultural Situations	X	X	X	X	/
Story-based Teaching	Narratives	X	X	X	X	/
	Storytelling	X	X	X	X	/
	Transmedia Stories	X	X	X	X	/
Meeting different learning strategies and styles	Visual	√	X	√	√	/
	Auditory	√	X	√	√	/
	Read/Write	X	+	X	X	/
	Kinaesthetic	X	X	X	X	/
Materials	The use of Technology	√	X	√	√	/
	Narrative texts	X	X	X	X	/
	Multi-media	X	X	X	X	/
	Cultural Materials	Φ	X	Φ	Φ	/
	Intercultural Materials	X	X	X	X	/
Communicative Teaching	Utilizing Real-World Situations	√	+	X	X	/
	Contextualising Language	√	√	√	√	/
	Oral Communication	+	+	+	+	/
	Integration of Language Skills	X	X	X	X	/
	Students' Engagement	√	√	√	√	/
	Meaningful Inputs/Outputs	Φ	√+	Φ	√	/

Note. X Never Φ Sometimes √ Frequently

+ Frequently + √+ Always

The results that were summarized in the above table (table 4.6) provide an overview of T002 practices in the OE class for second-year EFL students. Plenary patterns within Classroom Interactions were present in all the observed sessions with a high occurrence of “frequently” in

session one and four, and “always” in session two and three. Therefore, there was consistency in engaging the whole class. Through the observations’ sessions, individual work of students was observed “frequently” in session one and three, “sometimes” in session two, and “always” in session three. For pair work, it was noted “sometimes” in session one and “never” in session two, and “frequently” in session four. The absence of group work was observed in session one and three, while it was respectively marked as “frequently+” and “frequently” in session two and four. Regarding the Content, most aspects were marked absent in all of the sessions, except for Cultural Diversity that was addressed “sometimes” in the first three sessions.

The results from the second observation of T002 OE class demonstrated a limitation in addressing the different learning styles that reflect students’ needs. Particularly, visual and auditory learning strategies were marked “frequently” in all sessions, while absent in session two. Other categories were remarkably absent in all the sessions. Worth noting, there was no implementation of Story-based Teaching. In the area of Materials, the use of technology was consistent in session one, three, and four, but absent in session two.

Further aspects, including narrative texts, multimedia materials, and intercultural materials were completely observed “absent” in all the four sessions. However, cultural materials were “sometimes” present in session one, three, and four, while absent in session two. In terms of Communicative Teaching, implementing real-world situations was observed “frequent” in session one and “sometimes” session 2; however, it was “absent” in sessions three and four. Contextualizing Language was “frequently” marked in all sessions which indicated the teacher’s perspectives towards the connectedness of language to real-world situations.

Oral Communication was included in every session, with varying frequencies from "sometimes" to "frequent +". However, the Integration of Language Skills was absent in all sessions. Students' Engagement was heavily marked as "frequent" across all the session. Finally, the quiz session was obviously different from the others. Assessing students in the fifth session

is linked with a shift in focus toward assessment rather than teaching practices. This, in fact, provided a good opportunity for the researcher to interpret the Evaluation Methods of T002.

4.1.2.1.3. Observations of the Third Teacher (T003)

The observation of T003 provided insightful findings about the observant's teaching practices across the four tracked sessions. The same Classroom Observation Checklist of Intercultural Teaching was consistently employed for T003. For a strategic analysis of the obtained data, the findings were summarized in the table below (table 4.7)

Table 4.7*Observations of T003*

Dimensions	Descriptors	T003 OE Observed Sessions			
		1	2	3	4 (Quiz)
Interaction Patterns	Plenary	√	√+	√+	/
	Individual	√+	+	√+	/
	Pair	X	X	X	/
	Group	X	X	X	/
Content Dealing with	Cultural Diversity/ Local and Target Culture	X	X	Φ	/
	Cultural/ Intercultural Issues	X	X	X	/
	Intercultural Barriers	X	X	X	/
	Authentic Intercultural Situations	X	X	X	/
Story-based Teaching	Narratives	+	X	X	/
	Storytelling	X	X	X	/
	Transmedia Stories	X	X	X	/
Meeting different learning strategies and styles	Visual	X	X	X	/
	Auditory	+	X	√	/
	Read/Write	√+	+	X	/
	Kinaesthetic	X	X	X	/
Materials	The use of Technology	X	X	√	/
	Narrative texts	X	X	X	/
	Multi-media	X	X	X	/
	Cultural Materials	X	X	X	/
	Intercultural Materials	X	X	X	/
Communicative Teaching	Utilizing Real-World Situations	Φ	X	X	/
	Contextualising Language	Φ	Φ	Φ	/
	Oral Communication	√+	Φ	Φ	/
	Integration of Language Skills	X	X	X	/
	Students' Engagement	Φ	√	Φ	/
	Meaningful Inputs/Outputs	Φ	Φ	Φ	/

As evidenced by the table (table 4.7), plenary and individual instruction patterns were consistently observed. Other patterns, viz., pair interactions and group works were completely absent in all the sessions. Concerning the content, cultural diversity was absent in session one and two, and was marked “sometime” in session three. As far as Story-based Teaching is concerned, narratives were marked “sometimes” in session one, whereas absent in session two and three. Both storytelling and transmedia stories were observed absent in all the sessions.

Within our observations, we noted that only auditory strategies were implemented as they were marked “frequently+”, in session one and “frequently” in session three, while absent in session two. Similarly, read/write strategies were observed “always” in session one and “frequently+” in session two.

In session three, there was an absent use of the last-mentioned strategies. Remarkably, a lack in prioritizing students’ differentiations was observed through the absence consideration of visual and kinaesthetic strategies across all the observed sessions. In terms of Materials, a total absence of technology use, narrative texts, multimedia, cultural materials, and intercultural materials were intensely marked in all the sessions, except for one-time “frequent” use of technology in session three. During the four-session observations of T003, we noted a different application of the Communicative Teaching. Specifically, real-world situations which are key feature in communicative teaching strategies were observed absent in all sessions, but appearing “sometimes” in session one.

Across the observed sessions, contextualizing language was addressed “sometimes”. It was observed that there was no integration of language skills. Regarding the other aspects, they were mostly marked “sometimes” across the observation phase. Similar to the previous observations, the last session was set for the quiz which allowed us to observe teachers’ perspectives and practices towards evaluating students. Markedly, T003 assessed the students through an impromptu oral exam. In this type of tests, learners are usually asked to talk about a topic that they pick from mixed pieces of papers. It is important to mention that all the topics did not align with the content.

4.1.2.2. Interpretation of the Observations’ Findings

This phase of our research that is based on conducting an observation aims at primarily validating our research problem, and to examine and evaluate how OE teachers at the Department of English at LTU integrate the intercultural dimension in their EFL classrooms.

Therefore, the observation intends to address our second research question that is raised with respect to the syllabus influence on teachers' practices regarding the integration of the intercultural dimension. To contextualize the results of the observations, interpreting the obtained results is critical. As such, we followed a dimension-by-dimension analysis. The observations provided valuable insights into three areas of our focus which are namely, the implementation of the OE syllabus, the integration of the intercultural dimension, and the use of multimodal teaching.

Concerning the implementation of the syllabus, the findings indicate that the three teachers predominantly used plenary and individual interaction patterns. These formats of interactions align with the traditional teacher-centred approach wherein teachers are the centre of the educational process. Not adhering to collaborative learning resulted in limiting students' opportunity to interculturally interact in an encouraging communicative environment. However, oral communication and contextualizing language use were frequently used, which suggests that the teachers partially implement communicative language teaching. However, the oral communication took the form of individual speeches, teacher-students' interactions, or open class discussions. Moreover, the inconsistent use of diversified teaching materials confirmed that the syllabus did not fully support the diversity of modern educational tools.

Based on the findings of the observations, it is indicated that there was a sporadic inclusion of cultural and intercultural content. The cultural content, particularly cultural diversity, was frequent in certain sessions within the T001 observation. We believe that this frequent implementation of cultural diversity by T001 was due to the impact of an uncontrolled variable as T001's area of expertise is the teaching of culture besides OE. However, there was a total absence of implementing the intercultural dimension in all the observed sessions with all the three teachers. This indicates that the intercultural dimension might not sufficiently be incorporated into the syllabus, except for some limited individual efforts of teachers.

For an effective teaching to take place, there is a need for multimodal learning strategies and innovative use of materials. These gaps are needed to be addressed so that an engaging and meaningful learning experience will be enhanced. Different studies in the field of education employed observations as a key methodology to explore whether or not the intercultural dimension is incorporated and prioritized in language classrooms, and thus examine how it is implemented. The observations of second-year OE teachers revealed both opportunities and challenges in enhancing ICC.

Upon conducting a semi-structured observation in likewise research studies, Sercu (2005) found similar results as she (2005) observed that EFL teachers' practices did not meet those of the anticipated 'Foreign Language and intercultural competent teacher'. However, our study is different in the sense that the observation is an extension of the syllabus evaluation so as to confirm that the gaps in the OE syllabus are reflected in the teaching practices of OE teachers at the Department of English at LTU.

4.1.3. The Experts' Interview

The present study aims at examining the effectiveness of TS on the development of EFL learners' ICC. Therefore, the key focus behind the interview (Appendix D) with the MESRS inspectors is to gain informative insight about the current state of the EFL curriculum regarding the integration of the intercultural dimension. It also intends to explore their perspectives towards incorporating the intercultural dimensions via innovative methods to maximize EFL learners' intercultural proficiency.

4.1.3.1. Analysis and Results of the Experts Interview

Due to the difficulties that the researcher had encountered in reaching the MESRS inspectors, getting their consents, or any replies on the emails, we limited the subjects of our study to only one inspector who agreed on conducting the interview over the phone. From a set

of eleven questions, ten questions (see Study Limitations and Delimitations) were addressed. The interview's questions are analysed and interpreted under the following headings.

➤ **The Inspector's Profile**

Our interviewee is one of the twelve general inspectors at the MESRS. He is a Professor in Information and Communication. He worked as a university teacher at Algiers University for almost sixteen years. Later in 2017, he was appointed at the MESRS as a general inspector. When asking our respondent about his responsibilities, he answered that the General Inspectorate is responsible for evaluating the quality of education, making regulations, suggesting improvements, and overseeing the functioning of the MESRS.

➤ **The Current State of the EFL Curriculum**

The seventh question aims to get satisfactory results about the state of the current EFL curriculum. Asking the inspector to comment on the seventh question (**Q7**. To what extent does the current EFL curriculum address ICC as a learning objective?), he stated that ICC is tremendously crucial in EFL education and should be addressed; however, this step should be carefully planned as a consideration of students' background and religious belongings should be regarded. Therefore, any introduction to ICC, if not carefully undertaken, may lead students to feel that they are culturally threatened because they may perceive their own cultural identity as being undervalued. For the inspector, this could end up negatively, resulting in resistance to engagement, and defensiveness. In an attempt to further clarify that ICC is not a mono-cultural approach, the inspector confirmed that they are welcoming all suggestions, but they should firstly prioritize the socio-cultural particularities of Algeria.

➤ **Content and Representation**

Question eight (**Q8**. How well does the teaching materials represent cultural perspectives?) targets the content and the representation of intercultural aspect in the EFL curriculum. As such, we asked the inspector about whether the teaching materials represent

cultural diversity or not. Accordingly, the respondent answered that certain modules, such as Civilization and Culture, are particularly designed to address this aspect. However, when discussing the OE module, the inspector highlighted that the cultural and intercultural representation may not be that apparent. Instead, they may be incorporated implicitly.

Within the same concern, we enquired about the balance between the local culture and the target culture in the EFL curriculum (**Q9**. Do current curricular balance between local and target culture?). In this regard, the inspector explained that the local culture is given an importance and a priority. The inspector clearly stated that “While any language curriculum should incorporate the target culture, it has to equally ensure that the local cultural identity is respected.”.

➤ **Teacher Support and Training**

When asked about how well teachers are guided to integrate the intercultural dimension into the classroom (**Q10**. What guidance is provided to teachers for integrating the intercultural dimension into the EFL classroom?), the inspector referred to the significant efforts that have been made by the ministry. In this respect, he explained that lately university teachers are being trained across all departments, for the aim of developing their intercultural competencies. These initiatives include sending teachers abroad via exchange programs, specialized training voyages, and linguistic stays that aim at enhancing their ability to effectively integrate the cultural content into their teaching practices.

4.1.3.2. Interpretations of the Inspector’s Interview

Assessing the integration of the intercultural dimension into the curriculum at the macro level is highly required for obtaining comprehensive understandings. Therefore, we conducted an interview with the MESRS inspectors for the aim of investigating their perspectives towards integrating the intercultural dimension in EFL curricula. As response to the seventh question in the interview, the inspector acknowledged that ICC is vital in EFL classes, and that EFL learners

are required to effectively and appropriately engage in intercultural situations. The inspector further stressed the importance of accounting for students' background culture and religious affiliations. That is to say, prioritizing learners' comfort levels and local culture is a focal point in designing EFL curriculum, and subsequently in designing syllabi.

The inspector's perspectives towards setting ICC as an essential learning objective are consistent with research in intercultural language education. Scholars like Byram (1997) argued that integrating ICC should focus on both understanding the target culture and students' own culture as well. In addition to that, his beliefs are aligned with research on intercultural responsive teaching (Gay, 2010) that suggested that educators must be thoughtful when introducing the intercultural elements in curriculum.

Concerning the content of the curriculum, the inspector mentioned that some modules directly address cultural and intercultural issues, while others like OE may not embed them. The need for more consistent integration of the intercultural dimension in all modules are highly required. In this respect, OE EFL classes are the best opportunity where learners can practise interaction (Byram, 1997; Kramsch, 1993).

As a response to question nine, the inspector stated that the local culture should be given primacy to maintain the Algerian cultural identity. This point was ensured by Kramsch (1993) who insisted that while developing ICC, it is important to maintain national identity. However, the inclusion of the target culture is equally important to prepare learners to engage in an effective global communication (Sercu, 2005).

As mentioned in the findings' section, the inspector discussed how the ministry is enhancing teachers' intercultural competencies. The literature on developing teachers' intercultural competence suggests that such actions, as those described by the inspector, including training, exchange programs and linguistics stay, are necessary for educators in the field of language education to develop an intercultural awareness (Byram & Feng, 2006).

Byram & Feng (2006) stressed the importance of experiential learning for teachers to enhance their cultural awareness.

4.2. Findings of the Explanatory Study

Within the explanatory phase, three questionnaires were deployed: Teachers' questionnaire, students' entrance questionnaire, and attitudinal questionnaire. In addition, a pretest, progress tests, and a post-test were conducted as part of the quasi-experiment. The generated data from these research instruments were rigorously analysed and interpreted for the purpose of testing the assumed hypothesis and elucidate the remaining research questions with depth and precision.

4.2.1. The Pre-experimental Phase

During the pre-experimental phase, we separately administered teachers' questionnaire and students' entrance questionnaire. The teachers' questionnaire aims at gathering insights into teachers' perceptions about ICC along with their pedagogical practices at the Department of English at LTU. As for students' questionnaire, it was conducted to identify needs and gaps, and derive comparative dispositions prior to undertaking the experiment.

4.2.1.1. Validity and Reliability Assessments of the Teachers' Questionnaire

Validity and reliability assessments are fundamental in certifying that the questionnaire produces consistent results and is able to yield trustworthy interpretations. To assess the questionnaire's internal consistency validity, a correlation analysis (the Spearman Correlation Coefficient) was performed. It is important to note that this type of test is used to measure the questionnaire items' relationships and assure that components are compatible with the questionnaire as a research instrument. As such, we subjected the questionnaire's quantitative scores to an R programming that generated the following table.

Table 4.8*The Results of the Correlation Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaires*

Items	Correlations	P-value
Item 1 to 2	0.80	0.003
Item 3 to 5	0.90	0.001
Item 6 to 11	0.89	0.002
Item 12 to 14	0.99	0.000
Item 15 to 18	0.96	0.000

Note. Level of Significance at 0.01

The above table (table 4.8) displays a correlation analysis that was run in R to assess internal consistency validity. The correlation scoring for all the items is significantly high as they all register above 0.08. Moreover, the significant level p ($p < 0.01$) confirms that the correlations are unlikely due to chance. Therefore, we conclude that the results indicate an excellent internal validity and, thus, individual items contribute to the overall tool.

Assessing the reliability of the questionnaire entails assessing its consistency which confirms that the questionnaire provides consistent results. Hence, Cronbach's Alpha test was performed to measure the questionnaire's internal consistency. Upon measuring the Cronbach's Alpha value, we found that the index reliability of this tool registers 0.91. This counting indicates excellent measurement to confirm the reliability of the questionnaire as a research tool.

4.2.1.2. Analysis and Interpretation of the Teacher's Survey Data

As previously stated, the questionnaire aims to probe teachers' perceptions towards the implementation of TS in the OE course to enhance students' ICC. Therefore, twenty-two questions were designed and administered to teachers at the Department of English at LTU who have experienced the teaching of OE. The return rate was 100% as all the 10 teachers completed the questionnaire. To systematically analyse and interpret the obtained data, consecutive

numbering of the questions is adopted. The response options, however, are included in the analyses and in the appendices (Appendix K). Following the questions, aggregate tables and figures are employed. It is important to note that the choice between tables and figures in presenting data is not arbitrary. In fact, tables are used to present exact percentages and frequencies so that the dataset can be easily compared. Figures are adopted to show patterns or illustrate relationships. In some cases, both tables and figures are used within the same question to combine precision and visualization on data that directly addresses one of the research aims and questions.

➤ **Section One: General Information**

Section one of the questionnaire (the first five questions) is concerned with the respondents' profile. As noted earlier, all the teachers are university awards; they all hold a Master Degree or a "Magistère" degree, and only 20% hold a PhD (Doctorate) degree. 90% of the teachers are fulltime lecturers with a work experience that ranged between three to eleven years of teaching. All of them teach at least two or more modules.

➤ **Section Two: Culture and Intercultural Teaching**

Q6. What do think about the integration of culture in EFL teaching?

The following table (table 4.9) displays a summary of the respondents' answers. It outlines both frequency and its corresponding percentage.

Table 4.9*Teachers' Responses to Integrating Culture in EFL Teaching*

Options	Frequency	Percentage %
Extremely important	8	80%
Very important	2	20%
Important	0	00%
Moderately important	0	00%
Slightly important	0	00%
Not important	0	00%

Evidently, the questionnaire's respondents assumed that integrating culture in EFL teaching is important. In numerical terms, 80% of the questioned teachers believed that incorporating the cultural aspect in EFL classrooms are extremely important, while the rest (20%) were convinced that culture is very important in the EFL teaching. None of the teachers disregarded culture as an integral part in EFL education. These results resonate with the fact that many researchers in the field of EFL education argued about the importance of embedding culture in EFL teaching and learning. For Kramsch (1998a), FLT is foreign culture teaching.

Q7. How often do you focus on cultural similarities and differences in Oral Expression sessions?

Table 4.10*Teachers' Reacts towards Cultural Diversities in OE Classes*

Options	Frequency	Percentage %
Always	0	00%
Often	3	30%
Sometimes	2	20%
Rarely	5	50%
Never	0	0%

Teachers' answers to question item seven indicate that they had a limited engagement with cultural similarities and differences in OE classrooms. Particularly, 30% reported that they “Often” addressed cultural similarities and differences, while 20% reported “Sometimes,” and 50% selected “Rarely”. Remarkably, none of the respondents admitted to “Always” or “Never”. Aligning with the body of literature wherein Byram and his colleagues (2001) coauthored to publish an influential work that emphasized the importance of training teachers to foster intercultural competence, the results indicate a need for practical guidelines to help teachers integrate cultural diversity into their EFL classes, and hence foster their students’ ICC

Q8. which of the following Intercultural Communicative Competence aspects do you believe is the key for successful intercultural communication? (Appendix K)

In response to this question, all the teachers (100%) believed that all the ICC aspects including intercultural knowledge, skills, attitudes, and awareness are essential for an effective intercultural communication. Teachers’ awareness on this matter aligns with Byram’s Model of ICC in which he (1997) focused on the mentioned aspects as key components of ICC.

Q9. How do you describe your students’ intercultural proficiency?

Table 4.11

Teachers’ Description of Students’ Intercultural Proficiency

Options	Frequency	Percentage %
Very good	0	00%
Good	0	00%
Very slow	3	30%
Slow	6	60%
I don’t know	1	10%

In addressing this question, the majority of teachers (60%) described their learners, in terms of intercultural proficiency, as low achievers. Besides, some of the respondents described their intercultural proficiency as “Very Slow”. None of the teachers reported that their students’

intercultural proficiency is “Good” or “Very Good”, while one teacher (10%) noted that she did not know about students’ intercultural proficiency and noticed that this needs testing measures.

Q10. Do you think students with good intercultural proficiency level are successful language communicators?

The given responses to this question reveal that all the questioned teachers (100%) were totally convinced that students with good intercultural proficiency level are successful language communicators. This, in fact, shows that teachers who have taught OE at the Department of English at LTU are aware of the importance of being interculturally competent. Subsequently, we can note from teachers’ responses on this question that in spite of the identified gaps in both the OE *Canevas* and teachers’ practices in the classrooms, teachers still demonstrate supportiveness of the significance of fostering students’ ICC.

Q11. Where would you locate the Oral Expression syllabus at the Department of English at Larbi Tebessi University?

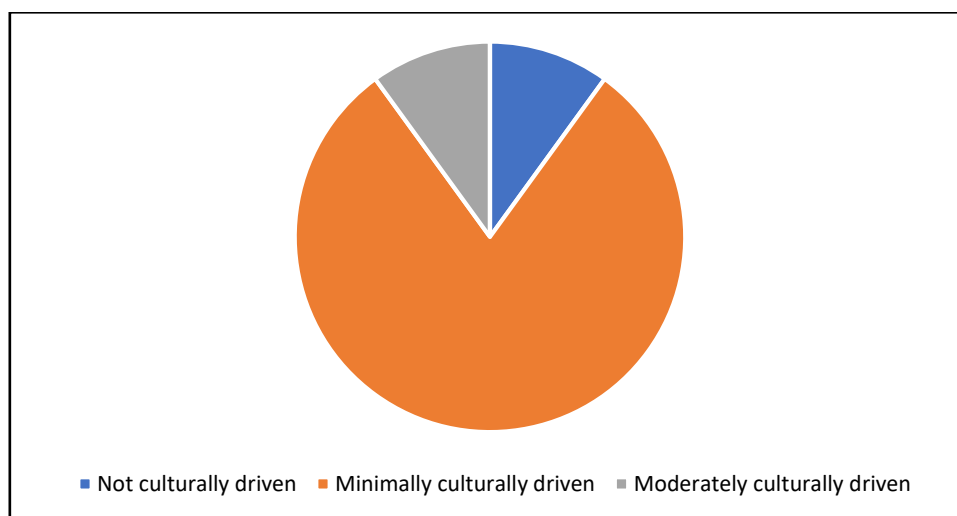
Table 4.12

Teachers’ Views on the Intercultural Load in the OE Syllabus

Options	Frequency	Percentage %
Not Culturally-driven	1	10%
Minimally Culturally-driven	8	80%
Moderately Culturally-driven	1	10%
Highly Culturally-driven	0	00%
Entirely Culturally-driven	0	00%

Figure 4.1

Teachers' Views on the Intercultural Load in the OE Syllabus



As shown in table (4.12) and figure (4.1), the majority of the respondents (80% of them) reported that the OE syllabus at the Department of English at LTU was “Minimally Culturally-driven”. The remaining 20% of the participants’ views were equally divided between 1 teacher who held the view that the syllabus was “Not Culturally-driven” and another teacher who assumed that the syllabus was “Moderately Culturally-driven”. Getting no responses to the last two options “Highly Culturally Driven” and “Entirely Culturally Driven” supports the findings of the document analysis. Results that are derived from this question items perfectly match our findings of the syllabus evaluation in the exploratory phase.

➤ **Section Three: The Use of Transmedia Storytelling**

Q12. How familiar are you with the concept of Transmedia Storytelling?

Table 4.13

Teachers' Familiarity with TS

Options	Frequency	Percentage %
Very familiar	0	00%
Somewhat familiar	7	70%
Not familiar	3	30%

The analysis of teachers' familiarity with the concept of TS are quite varied. Interestingly, none of the teachers reported being "Very familiar" with TS, while 30% of the teachers reported being "Not familiar" with TS. The majority of the respondents (70%) are "Somewhat familiar". These results demonstrate a need for some targeted introductory training to increase teachers' TS knowledge so as to be able to engage in this innovative pedagogical approach.

Q13. If familiar, which transmedia tools or platforms have you used in your teaching?

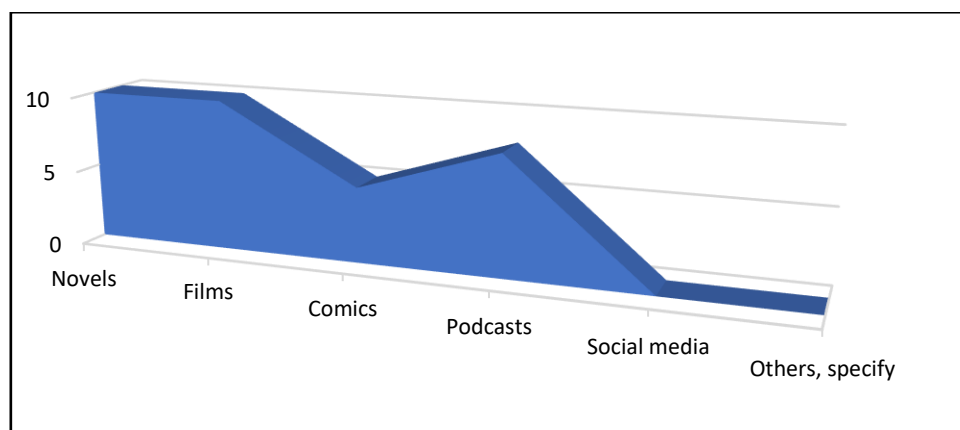
Table 4.14

Uses of TS Platforms

Options	Frequency	Percentage %
Novels	7	100%
Films	7	100%
Comics	3	42.86%
Podcasts	5	71.43%
Social media	0	00%
Others, specify	0	00%

Figure 4.2

Uses of TS Platforms



This question item is a follow-up of the previous question (question 12). It was addressed to teachers who reported their familiarity with the concept of TS. Findings from this question are illustrated in table 4.14 and figure 4.2. It is important to mention that an area figure

was generated particularly because this type of graph uses varying degrees of opacity that better transcribe data. Interestingly, all the seven teachers reported that they have used “Novels” and “Movies” within their teaching practices, while most of them (71.43%) added that they generally implemented “Podcast” materials. The least percentage (42.86%) favoured “Comics”. It seems that teachers were open to the implementation of different materials.

Q14. How often do you integrate storytelling (in any format) into your teaching practices?

Table 4.15

Teachers’ Frequencies for Integrating Storytelling

Options	Frequency	Percentage %
Regularly	2	20%
Occasionally	6	60%
Rarely	1	10%
Never	1	10%

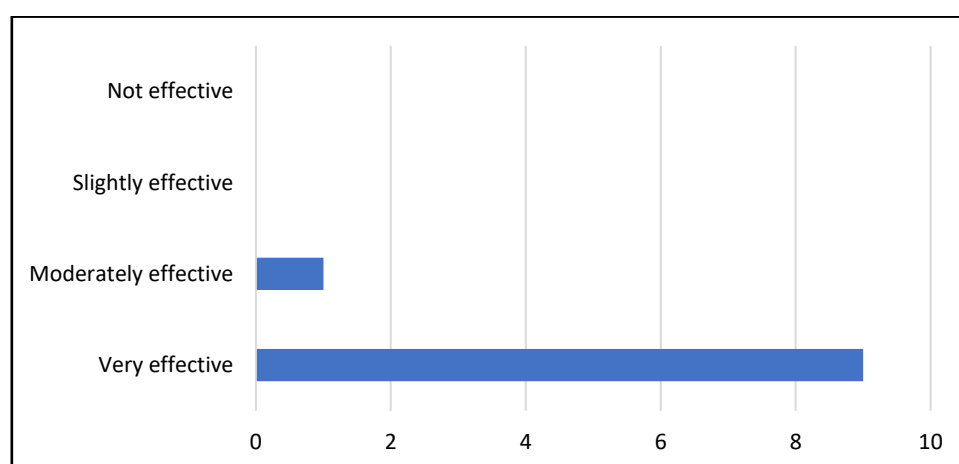
The results reveal that respondents’ answers are inconsistent. 20% of teachers reported that they used storytelling "Regularly", while the majority (60%) claimed that they incorporated it "Occasionally". The given responses suggest that the teachers treated storytelling as a supplementary activity. Therefore, the need for greater emphasis on storytelling’s potentials should be highlighted.

➤ **Section Four: Perceptions of Transmedia Storytelling and Intercultural Communicative Competence Development**

Q15. To what extent do you think Transmedia Storytelling can help students understand different cultural perspectives?

Table 4.16*Teachers' Views on the Efficacy of TS*

Options	Frequency	Percentage %
Very effective	9	90%
Moderately effective	1	10%
Slightly effective	0	00%
Not effective	0	00%

Figure 4.3*Teachers' Views on the Efficacy of TS*

As illustrated in table 4.16 and the horizontal bar graph (figure 4.3), respondents demonstrated heightened awareness of the usefulness of TS in developing students' understanding of cultural differences. Numerically speaking, 90% of the participants assumed that TS is "Very effective", whereas 10% reported that it is "Moderately effective" in enhancing students' understanding of cultural diversities. The two last options that disregard the efficacy of TS were not selected at all by the respondents which indicates that they are in favour of TS as an innovative powerful teaching tool.

Q16. Which aspects of ICC do you think TS can develop the most? (Select all that apply)

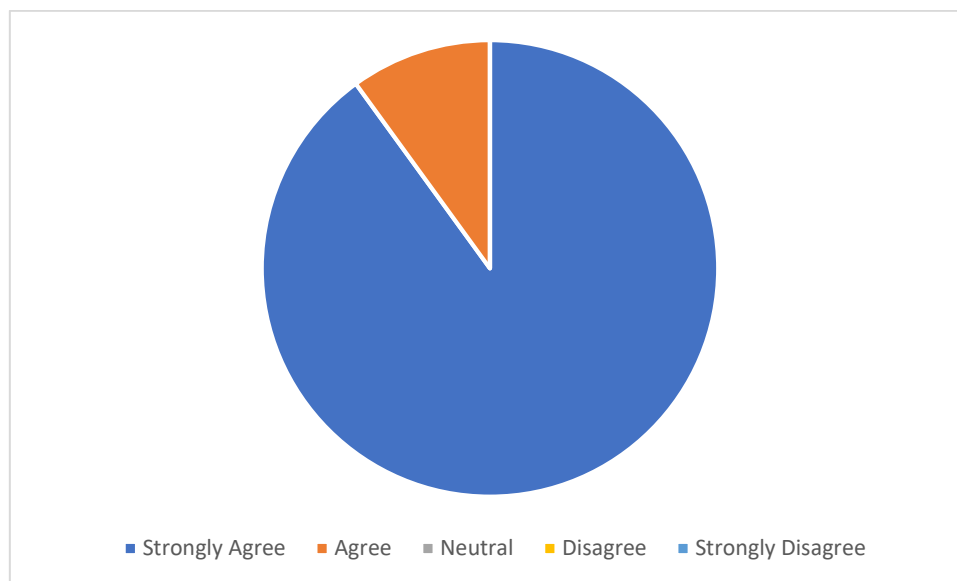
The question probes teachers' perceptions on which ICC aspects can be developed through a TS-based course. Interestingly, all respondents (100%) selected all the given options

(Appendix k) which indicates a consensus on the efficacy of TS in enhancing ICC across all the four aspects.

Q17. Do you think that TS can motivate learners to engage more with intercultural topics?

Figure 4.4

Teachers' Perceptions Towards the Effectiveness of Transmedia Storytelling in Motivating Students to Engage with Intercultural Topics



As a response to this question item, a strong agreement among teachers that TS motivates learners to engage with intercultural topics is remarkably noted. Particularly, 90% of the respondents reported "Strongly Agree", and 10% selected "Agree". In sum, the statistics highlights that TS is valuable in fostering students' motivation and engagement in intercultural contexts. The revelations support the view of Ferreira, et al. (2006) that emphasized the relationship between TS and motivation.

Q19. How do you perceive the challenges of using TS in an EFL classroom?

Table 4.17*Teachers' Views of the Challenges of Using TS in EFL Classrooms*

Options	Frequency	Percentage %
Lack of resources	3	30%
Time constraints	4	40%
Difficulty in aligning with curriculum goals	3	30%
Limited digital literacy among learners	0	00%
Other (please specify)	0	00%

As the above table (4.17) shows, time constraints (40%) emerged as the most significant challenge that restricts the use of TS, the remaining responses were equally divided between reporting the lack of resources (30%) and the difficulty of aligning TS with curriculum goals (30%). The results on the three first challenges perfectly match Deardorff's (2006) belief that such challenges hinder learners' progress toward the desire of becoming an intercultural communicator. Interestingly, none of the respondents reported other challenges. Teachers' views on the challenges of implementing TS are best expressed by Kalogeras (2014) who pointed that the integration of TS in EFL education necessitates addressing issues such as inclusivity, cultural representation, and timing to ensure its effectiveness.

➤ **Section Five: Teachers' Perspectives on TS and ICC**

The last four items of the teachers' questionnaire are open-ended questions. They aim at probing teachers' perceptions, and recommendations towards the implementations of TS to develop EFL learners' ICC. The findings from this section were thematically analysed.

The majority of the respondents emphasized the need for professional development. In this vein, they referred to the lack of training to effectively incorporate TS into EFL classes. Moreover, participants highlighted the potentials of TS, with most of the teachers describing it as an innovative tool that can foster learners' engagement and intercultural competence. Going

through their responses, we noted that teachers held the firm belief that TS is effective in enhancing critical thinking, creativity, especially when it is conformed with intercultural objectives.

Respondents' Suggestions concentrated on the importance of developing students' ICC through innovative tools that can help keep students engaged and motivated. One of the respondents suggested incorporating community-based projects. In short, teachers' responses on the twenty-two question items reveal that they are completely aware of the recent movements in the field of FLT and learning. Overall, they demonstrated their appreciation for intercultural learning and teaching and the integration of innovative pedagogical tools that both enhance students' ICC and account for their needs and differentiations.

4.2.1.3. Validity and Reliability Assessments of Students' Entrance Questionnaire

As previously mentioned, validity and reliability assessments are significant measures to ensure the consistency of the questionnaire and the trustworthiness of its results. To start with, a Correlation Analysis (using the Spearman Correlation Coefficient) was performed in order to assess the questionnaire's internal consistency validity. Hence, the following table was generated by an R programming.

Table 4.18

The Results of the Correlation Analysis of Students' Entrance Questionnaire

Items	Correlations	P-value
Item 1 to 6	0.85	0.002
Item 7 to 10	0.97	0.000
Item 11 to 12	0.99	0.000
Item 13 to 16	0.82	0.004
Item 17 to 18	0.90	0.001
Item 18 to 20	0.96	0.000
Item 21 to 22	0.97	0.000

Note. Level of Significance at 0.01

Table 4.18 demonstrates that the Correlation Analysis of the students' questionnaire's items, that is intended to assess the questionnaire's internal consistency validity. The calculated correlations, as shown in the table, are highly significant, ranging from 0.82 to 0.99 which indicate that all the measures are above the standard level of 0.08. moreover, the p-value across all the items is well below the significant level ($p < 0.01$). Such counting confirms that the correlations are unlikely due to chance. Overall, the results that are displayed in table 4.18 indicate an excellent internal validity.

To ensure the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's Alpha test was performed. Upon running the Cronbach's Alpha value, we found that the index reliability of this tool is 0.93. This accounting demonstrates excellent measurement to validate the reliability of the questionnaire as a research instrument.

4.2.1.4. Analysis and Interpretation of Students' Entrance Questionnaire

In the pre-experimental phase, an entrance questionnaire was administered to all the participants in both the experimental group ($n=38$) and the control group ($n=38$). As it precedes the experiment, the questionnaire aims at gathering comparable baseline data on respondents' schematic knowledge, experiences, and perceptions regarding ICC and TS in EFL context, prior to undertaking any treatment. Therefore, the running section is intended to analyse and interpret the obtained data from the students' entrance questionnaire.

The return rate of the questionnaire was 89.47% which is reasonably significant. To elaborate it, 68 students from the EG ($n=34$ respondents) and the CG ($n=34$ respondents) completed the questionnaire out of the total number of participants ($N=76$).

➤ Section One: Biodata Information

The first section featured six questions that addressed students' age, gender, multimedia use, English proficiency, and their intercultural exchange. The results from the first section are displayed in table 4.19.

Table 4.19*Respondents' Biodata Information*

Biodata Information	Experimental Group	Control Group
Age	18-24	18-27
Gender	14-Male 20-Female	10-Male 24-Female
Use of Multimedia Software	21/34	24/34
English Fluency	22/34	23/34
Travelling Abroad	None	None

Table 4.19 clearly displays respondents' age which ranged from 18 to 24 in the EG, and from 18 to 27 in the CG. It also demonstrates their gender; 14 males and 20 females in the EG, and 10 males and 24 females in the CG. The two variables of age and gender are not of interest for this research as they were found not to impact the intervention.

In accordance with the multimedia nature of our independent variable (TS), the third question targeted students' skills in using multimedia software. In response to this question, it was revealed that most students in both groups could use multimedia software. Regarding their English fluency, most of students in both groups estimated that they were fluent English speakers. As far as the opportunity of intercultural exchange is concerned, none of the students have travelled abroad. However, most of them had at least one foreign key-pal.

The obtained results from the first section of the questionnaire that covered six question items revealed that both groups are identical regarding their background information. Sharing similar characteristics is sceptical for effecting participants' intercultural experience.

➤ **Section Two: Students' Perceptions toward the Nexus of Language and Culture**

In dealing with the interrelatedness of language and culture, five questions were addressed to identify students' perceptions toward the nexus of language and culture in the EFL context. To ensure the organization and the clarity of the obtained data, consecutive numbering of the questions, accompanied by aggregate tables and figures, are followed.

Q7. According to you, culture is: (Appendix L)

Table 4.20*Respondents' Perceptions of Culture*

Group	Items	Frequency	Percentage %
Experimental Group	Everyday's Life	8	23.53%
	Literature, Art, and Music	4	11.76%
	Both Meanings	21	61.76%
	Other Meaning	1	2.94%
Control Group	Everyday's Life	10	29.41%
	Literature, Art, and Music	7	20.59%
	Both Meanings	17	50%
	Other Meaning	0- None	0%

Responses to the seventh question item revealed that 8 participants (23.53%) in the EG believed that culture refers to people's everyday life, beliefs, customs, behaviour and values, while only 4 of them (11.76%) related culture to the country's literature, art and music. Interestingly, most of the participants (61.76%) selected both meanings. Only one student specified a different meaning; noting that "culture is an embedded part of language".

Within the same question item, respondents from the CG demonstrated similar perceptions as 10 students (29.41%) answered that culture, for them, is people's everyday life, beliefs, customs, behaviour, and values. 7 others (20.59%) conceptualised culture as the country's literature, art, and music, while half of the respondents (17 respondents) believed that both meanings defined the concept culture. However, none of them specified a different perception of culture.

According to the gathered data from the questionnaire on the seventh question item, it is indicated that respondents in both groups similarly perceived the concept of culture. Therefore, most of them accounted for the two aspects of culture; small "c" culture that refers to every day's aspects of culture, and capital "C" culture that refers to its institutionalized aspects like art, literature, and music. This perception of culture is vital for a proper

understanding of ICC. Categorizing culture in term of “small c” and “capital C” has been widely acknowledged by scholars in the field of ICC and sociolinguistics, including Kramsch (1993) and Byram (1997).

Q8. Is it possible to learn a language without its culture? -Yes -No

Q9. If yes, please explain

Q10. If no, please explain

Table 4.21

Respondents' Perceptions of the Nexus of Language and Culture

		Frequency	Percentage %
The Experimental Group	Yes	22	64.71%
	No	12	35.29%
The Control Group	Yes	20	58.82%
	No	14	41.18%

As shown in table (4.21) above, 64.71% of the respondents in the EG claimed that it is possible to learn a language without its culture, while the least percentage (35.29%) reported that learning a language is linked with the learning of its culture. Likely, the great majority of the CG's participants (58.82%) believed that language and culture are not related, whereas 41.18% of them opposed this view.

Henceforth, the majority of the EG and the CG's participants shared a similar response to the eighth question. They both believed that it is possible to learn a language without its culture. However, none of the respondents provided solid arguments in the follow-up question; they either wrote nothing in the explanation section or they differently restated their answers by noting that language does not relate to culture. Holding this view about language and culture puts the surveyed students on the same line with some linguistic schools that have historically

emphasized the universal aspects of language rather than connecting it to culture, including Saussurean linguistics, Chomsky universal grammar, and formalism.

Q11. Do you think that learning about foreign cultures in an EFL classroom is...(Appendix L)

Table 4.22

Perceptions towards Foreign Cultures in EFL Classroom

Group	Items	Frequency	Percentage %
The Experimental Group	More important	8	23.53%
	Equally important	3	8.82%
	Less Important	12	35.29%
	Not important	11	32.35%
The Control Group	More important	10	29.41%
	Equally important	5	14.71%
	Less Important	10	29.41%
	Not important	9	26.47%

In both groups, most of the respondents assumed that learning about foreign cultures is either less important or not important in an EFL setting, while the minority of them were convinced that learning about foreign cultures is more important than learning about their own culture. However, few of the respondents (8.82% in the EG-17.71% in the CG) held the opinion that learning the TC and the foreign culture are equally important.

This indicates that both the EG and CG's subjects had similar responses in term of the importance of learning about foreign cultures in the EFL classroom. Their responses on this question item match their view that language and culture are not related. Therefore, there were no significant differences in their perceptions of integrating foreign cultures in EFL classes prior to the experiment.

➤ **Section Three: Integrating the Intercultural Dimension in the OE Syllabus to develop EFL Learners' ICC**

Q 12. What language priorities should be included in the OE syllabus?

Table 4.23*Emphasis of OE syllabus*

Group	Language Priority	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The Experimental Group	To use grammar correctly	28(81.43%)	3(7.14%)	2(5.20%)	1(6.23%)
	To expand vocabulary	18 (23.53%)	8(52.94%)	5(14.71%)	3(8.82%)
	To become Fluent speaker	32(94.12%)	2(5.88%)	0(00%)	0(00%)
	To become intercultural speaker	7(20.59%)	8(23.53%)	9(26.47%)	10(29.41%)
The Control Group	To use grammar correctly	27(79.41%)	4(11.76%)	1(2.94%)	2(5.88%)
	To expand vocabulary	3(8.82%)	27(79.41%)	2(5.88%)	2(5.88%)
	To become Fluent speaker	14(41.18%)	9(26.47%)	6(17.65%)	5(14.71%)
	To become intercultural speaker	5(14.12%)	8(23.53%)	15(44.12%)	6(17.65%)

The twelfth question's results indicate that respondents in both the EG and the comparison group held similar attitudes regarding language priorities in OE syllabus. As such, they strongly emphasized grammatical accuracy, with 81.43% of the EG and 79.41% of the CG strongly agreeing. Moreover, Vocabulary expansion is similarly valued. Nevertheless, respondents in both groups were not interested in becoming intercultural speakers.

These findings show similar preferences for prioritizing grammar and vocabulary in an OE syllabus. Students' perception of OE syllabi was largely discussed by Byram et al. (2001) who explained that a syllabus that prioritizes linguistic competence can be effective in

developing linguistic accuracy and fluency. However, it fails to produce students who can effectively engage in communicative global interaction.

Q 13. Would you say that your OE course has a wide range of intercultural materials?

Table 4.24

Students' Comments on the OE Intercultural Load

Group	Options	Frequency	Percentage%
Experimental Group	Yes	7	20.59%
	No	27	76.47%
Control Group	Yes	4	11.76%
	No	30	88.24%

As table 4.24 displays, the highest percentages 76.47% for the EG, and 88.24% for the CG indicates that the majority of the respondents claimed that their OE course lacked the implementation of the intercultural materials. Their clarifications in the follow-up questions (Q14, Q15) are because these dimensions are difficult to integrate. In fact, these results conformed with the research's gap and the primary findings at the level of document analysis and observations.

Q16. Please, rate the importance of implementing the following skills in the OE syllabus (a Likert scale table was given)

Table 4.25*Students' Descriptions of the OE skills focus*

Group	Skills	Not important	Fairly important	Important	Very important
The Experimental Group	Cognitive Skills	None (0%)	4 (11.76%)	6 (17.56%)	25 (70.59%)
	Linguistic Skills	2 (5.88%)	3 (8.82%)	25 (73.53%)	4 (11.76%)
	Cultural Skills	6 (17.65%)	23 (67.65%)	3 (8.82%)	2 (5.88%)
	Intercultural Skills	26 (76.47%)	4 (11.76%)	3 (8.82%)	1 (2.94%)
The Control Group	Cognitive Skills	1 (2.94%)	3 (8.82%)	4 (11.76%)	26 (76.47%)
	Linguistic Skills	1 (2.94%)	2 (5.88%)	3 (8.82%)	28 (82.35%)
	Cultural Skills	7 (20.59%)	22 (64.71%)	4 (11.76%)	1 (2.94%)
	Intercultural Skills	27 (79.41%)	4 (11.76%)	2 (5.88%)	1 (2.94%)

As displayed in table (4.25), the data highlight that the respondents in both groups shared similar perceptions toward skills' priorities in the OE syllabus. The majority of the participants valued cognitive and linguistic skills by responding with 70.59% and 76.47% to cognitive skills as "very important". Larger numerical percentages indicate that 85.29% of the EG and 91.17% of the CG's participants valued linguistic skills. Notably, cultural skills were fairly emphasized as most of the participants considered them "fairly important" (67.65% in the experimental and 64.71% in the comparison group). As expected, intercultural skills are underrated, with approximately 75% in both groups considering them "not important".

These results implicate that the respondents in both groups held a shared belief on emphasizing cognitive and linguistic competencies. This gap should be addressed with a consideration of an interculturally-based syllabus.

➤ **Section Four: Integrating Transmedia Storytelling in Orality-based EFL Classrooms to Enhance Learners' ICC**

Q17. What do you think is the best way to integrate the Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) in an Oral Expression syllabus?

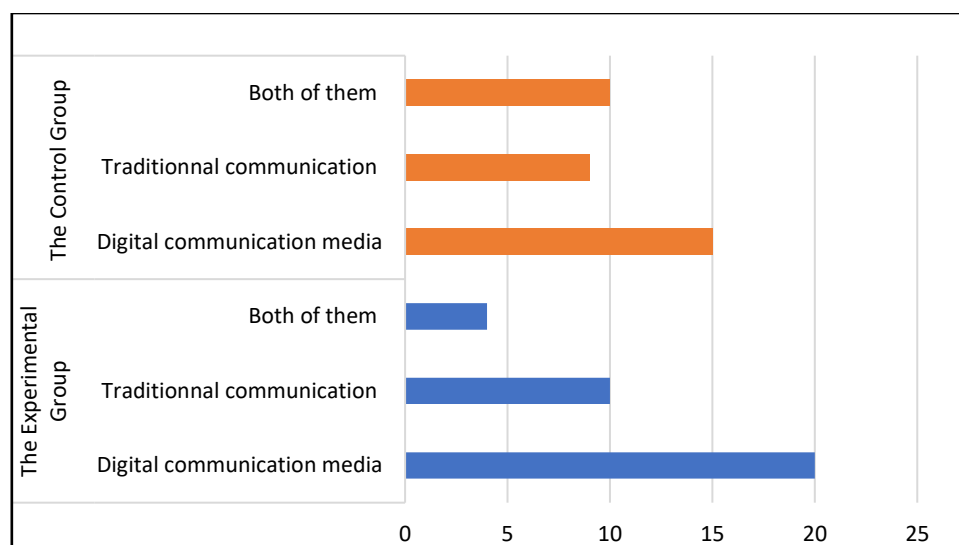
Table 4.26

Respondents' perceptions towards the Implementation of the Intercultural Dimension in the OE Syllabus

Group	Items	Frequency	Percentage %
The Experimental Group	Digital communication media	20	58.82%
	Traditional communication	10	29.41%
	Both of them	4	11.76%
The Control Group	Digital communication media	15	44.12%
	Traditional communication	9	26.47%
	Both of them	10	29.41%

Figure 4.5

Respondents' Perceptions towards the Implementation of the Intercultural Dimension in the OE Syllabus



From table 4.26 and figure 4.5, it is indicated that the EG and the CG held similar perspectives regarding the integration of the intercultural dimension in the OE syllabus. The frequencies within the EG reveal that more than half of the participants (58.82%) preferred digital communication media and the rest are divided in opinion from traditional communication (29.41%) to both forms (11.76%). Likewise, in the CG, digital communication

media is also valued (44.12%), followed by traditional communication (26.47%), and some (29.41%) considered that both must be used.

These findings implied that the respondents in both groups preferred digital media as a tool to integrate ICC. Their stance reflects their awareness of its growing relevance in modern education. However, the significant support of traditional methods and combined approaches suggests that integrating multiple methods can address diverse learner needs.

Q18. Where do you get most of your intercultural encounters? (Select All that Apply)

Table 4.27

Intercultural Encounter Sources among Students

Options	Experiment Group		Control Group	
	Frequency	Percentage %	Frequency	Percentage%
Books	6	17.6%	4	11.8%
Games	8	23.5%	5	14.7%
Movies	20	58.8%	22	64.7%
Social Media Platforms	25	73.5%	18	52.9%
Webtoons	5	14.7%	2	5.9%
Mangas	10	29.4%	15	44.1%
All of Them	8	23.5%	3	8.8%
Other (Specify)	3	8.8%	1	2.9%

As illustrated in table (4.27), social media platforms are the most prominent intercultural source for the EG's respondents (73.5%), along with the CG (52.9%). These high percentages reveal the vital role of social platforms in providing opportunities for intercultural interaction. This is consistent with studies, such as Kim and Lee (2018), which emphasize the power of social media in fostering ICC and minimizing cultural barriers among younger users.

Movies were selected by 58.8% of the students surveyed in the EG, and 64.7% of the CG's respondents. This aligns with the literature that highlight films as a rich cultural narrative

medium (Chao et al., 2020). Unexpectedly, books as a more traditional medium, were not reported by participants in both groups as a source for their intercultural encounters. This, in fact, reflects a shift in media preferences. Kramsch (2013) noted that in spite of their valuable cultural insights, books are often less engaging for younger learners who favour dynamic and digital formats.

Q19. Would people from different countries enjoy the intercultural experience of the same Transmedia Storytelling; those stories that expand across different media platforms like Harry Potter and Lord of the Rings? - Yes - No

Q20. If yes, please explain...

Q21. If no, please explain....

Table 4.28

Students' Reacts to TS and Intercultural Experiences

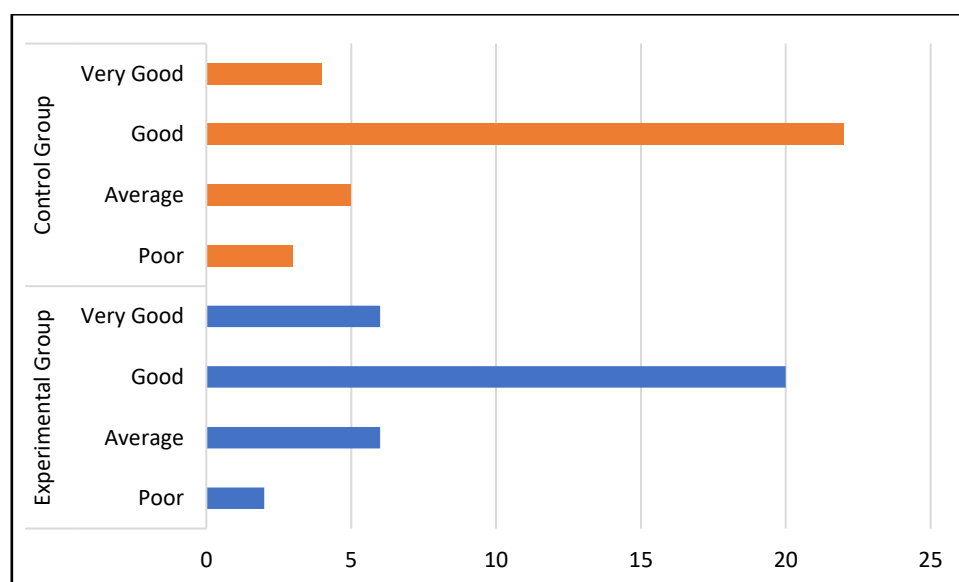
Group		Frequency	Percentage %
EG	Yes	33	97.06%
	No	1	2.94%
CG	Yes	34	100%
	No	0	00%

Interestingly, almost all the respondents thought that audience in different language speaking countries, regardless of their cultural backgrounds, would enjoy the intercultural experiences that are accompanied with TS. In numerical terms, 97.06% of the EG and 100% of the CG answered with yes to question item number twenty-one.

Q22. How would you rate the choice of Transmedia Storytelling as a way to develop your Intercultural Communicative Competence?

Table 4.29*Respondents' Perceptions of TS and ICC*

Group	Rating	Frequency	Percentage (%)
EG	Poor	2	5.88%
	Average	6	17.65%
	Good	20	58.82%
	Very Good	6	17.65%
CG	Poor	3	8.82%
	Average	5	14.71%
	Good	22	64.71%
	Very Good	4	11.76%

Figure 4.6*Students' Perceptions of TS and ICC*

In response to this question item, 58.82% of the respondents in the EG and 64.71% in the CG rated TS as “Good” pedagogical tool for enhancing ICC. Moreover, 17.65% of the EG’s surveyed students, and 11.76% of the CG’s respondents reported that the implementation of TS to enhance ICC is “Very Good”, while “Poor” and “Very Good” mark low frequencies in both groups. These results are compatible with Jenkin’s (2006) view that TS enhances students’ engagement and intercultural understanding through multi-modal narratives that set a solid ground for us to engage in the treatment.

Q23. If you have any further suggestion about developing learners' Intercultural Communicative Competence, please write them here?

In response to the last question item, few respondents suggested role-playing, exchange programmes, and integrating cultural materials to develop ICC. However, most of the surveyed participants in both groups didn't make any suggestions which we believe is due to their unfamiliarity with ICC or hesitation to share.

4.2.2. Findings of the Experimental Phase

In this research, the experiment is intended to provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of TS in developing EFL learners' ICC. It directly addresses the research's main objective with respect to the effectiveness of integrating the intercultural dimension, represented as TS, in developing EFL learners' ICC at the Department of English at LTU. During the experiment that lasted for one semester during the academic year 2022-2023, students of both the EG (n=38) and the CG (n=38) completed a pretest, progress tests, and a post-test at the end of the experimental phase.

4.2.2.1. Analysis and Results of the Pretest

As an introductory phase, it is worth ensuring that participants' initial level in terms of ICC is roughly the same. Therefore, we subjected the pretest data to an SPSS ver.25. As mentioned in earlier sections, the pretest was carried out with all the participants in both the EG and the CG. The pretest was represented as a bifurcated test; the first part featured a scenario-based roleplay and the second part consisted of an interview (Appendix E). Based on Kramsch's (1993) and Byram's (1997) models of ICC, different variables that reflect the four ICC components were included in the rating scale. For more straightforward analysis, we parallelly worked on a broad-based scale that was calculated through determining the mean scores via SPSS ver.25. Findings of the pretest are summarized in table 4.30.

Table 4.30*Pretest's Scores of the Experimental Group and the Control Group*

ID	Group	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes	Awareness	MeanStat	ID	Group	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes	Awareness	MeanStat
S001	1,00	3,00	1,00	3,00	1,00	2,00	S039	2,00	3,00	1,00	3,00	3,00	2,50
S002	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	S040	2,00	3,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	2,00
S003	1,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,50	S041	2,00	3,00	3,00	1,00	3,00	2,50
S004	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	S042	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00
S005	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	S043	2,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	3,00	2,00
S006	1,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,50	S044	2,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	3,00	2,00
S007	1,00	2,00	1,00	3,00	1,00	1,75	S045	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00
S008	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	S046	2,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	1,00	2,50
S009	1,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,50	S047	2,00	3,00	1,00	3,00	1,00	2,00
S010	1,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	1,00	2,50	S048	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00
S011	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	S049	2,00	3,00	3,00	5,00	3,00	3,50
S012	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	S050	2,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	1,00	2,50
S013	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	S051	2,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,50
S014	1,00	3,00	1,00	3,00	1,00	2,00	S052	2,00	3,00	1,00	3,00	1,00	2,00
S015	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	S053	2,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	1,00	2,50
S016	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	S045	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00
S017	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	S055	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00
S018	1,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	S056	2,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,50
S019	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	S057	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00
S020	1,00	5,00	3,00	3,00	1,00	3,00	S058	2,00	3,00	3,00	5,00	1,00	3,00
S021	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	S059	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00
S022	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	S060	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00
S023	1,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,50	S061	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00
S024	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	S062	2,00	3,00	1,00	3,00	1,00	2,00
S025	1,00	5,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	3,50	S063	2,00	3,00	1,00	3,00	1,00	2,00
S026	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	S064	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00
S027	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	S065	2,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,50
S028	1,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,50	S066	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00
S029	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	S067	2,00	3,00	1,00	3,00	1,00	2,00
S030	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	S068	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00
S031	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	S069	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00
S032	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	S070	2,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,50
S033	1,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,50	S071	2,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,50
S034	1,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	1,00	2,50	S072	2,00	1,00	1,00	3,00	1,00	1,50
S035	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	S073	2,00	3,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	2,00
S036	1,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	1,00	2,50	S074	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00
S037	1,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	1,00	2,50	S075	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00
S038	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	S076	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00

Note. **Group 1** Experimental Group – **Group 2** Control Group

As displayed in table 4.30, the 76 participants' performances of both groups were scored based on their ICC sub-elements. On a rating scale of 1, 3, and 5, students of both the EG and the comparison group were assessed on their intercultural knowledge, intercultural skills, intercultural attitudes, and on their critical cultural awareness. The last column (Mean-Stat) displayed the mean of the overall ICC components.

4.3.2.1.1. Analysis of the Pretest Scores

H0 (The Null Hypothesis): If Transmedia Storytelling is integrated in second-year OE syllabus at LTU, students' Intercultural Communicative Competence will not develop.

H1 (The Alternative Hypothesis): If Transmedia Storytelling is integrated in second-year OE syllabus at LTU, students' Intercultural Communicative Competence will significantly develop.

To validate the effect of our treatment, the obtained results of the pretest were subjected to a statistical computation via SPSS so as to ensure groups' equivalence. By statistically comparing the pretest scores of the EG with that of the CG, the researcher could confirm whether or not the groups were initially at the same level in terms of their ICC. Therefore, an independent sample t-test was used.

Before delving into specifics, the descriptive statistics for both the EG and the comparison group were calculated to provide a clear outlook of their overall performance. The following table (table 4.31) summarizes the means, standard deviations, and standard errors for both groups.

Table 4.31

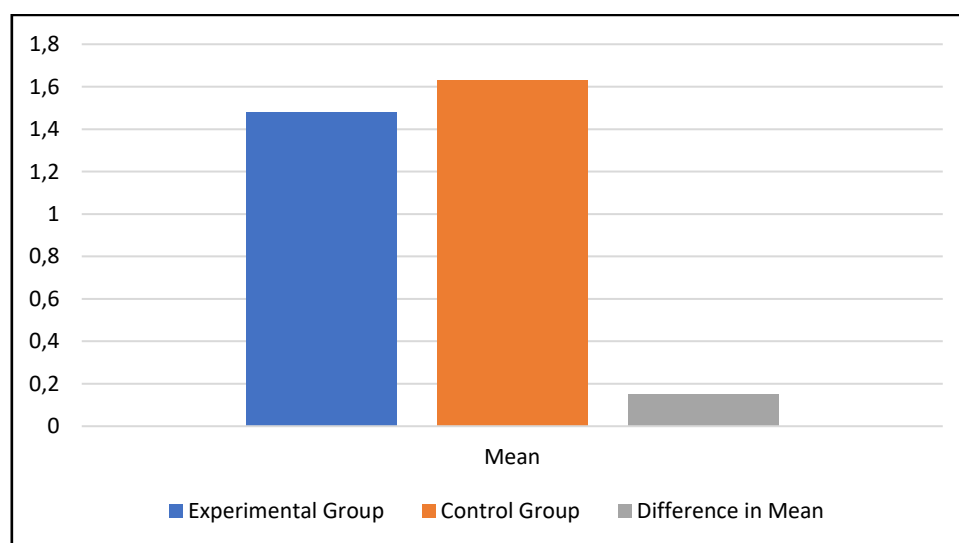
Pretest's Descriptive Statistics of the Experimental Group and the Control Group

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental Group	38	1,4803	,70802	,11486
Control Group	38	1,6316	,67468	,10945

By observing the descriptive statistics of both the EG and the CG in table 4.31, we notice that the mean of the EG registers 1.4803 while the mean of the CG is 1.6316 with a difference in means -0.15132. This indicates that scores of both the EG and the CG means have no statistical discrepancy. Concerning the standard deviation (Std. Deviation), the EG registers a standard deviation of 0.70802 which has a wider spread in scores, while the CG has a standard deviation of 0.67468. As a result of the slight difference in Std. Deviation, the standard error of the mean for the EG is slightly higher. Statistically, these noted differences are considered small. The mean difference between both groups can be best observed in an illustrative bar graph (figure 4.7).

Figure 4.7

Means of the Pretest's Scores of Both Groups



The above figure (Figure 4.7) indicates that, on average, the EG scores were slightly lower than the CG scores. Despite the fact that comparing the means provided basic understanding, it cannot provide statistical evidence to determine whether or not the difference occurred by chance. Thus, an independent sample t-test was used to evaluate statistical significance and control random variation. These are crucial in testing the hypotheses. The following table (table 4.32) displays the independent sample t-test of the pre-test scores.

Table 4.32*Independent Samples T-test for the Pretest Scores*

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					
	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std.Error Difference
Equal variances assumed	,038	,846	-,954	74	,343	-,15132	,15865
Equal variances not assumed			-,954	73,82	,343	-,15132	,15865

As shown in table 4.32, the Levene's Test of Equality Variances yielded F value (F=0.038) and p-value (Sig.) of 0.846, which is greater than the significant level ($\alpha=0.05$). This, in fact, signifies that assuming the equal variances between both the EG and the CG is not violated. In the second top row that demonstrates the t-test for equality of means, we can note that the p-value sig.(2-tailed) is 0.343 which is greater than the standard significant level ($\alpha=0.05$). This indicates that the difference in the means of the two groups (0.15132) is not statistically significant. Therefore, the EG and the CG initial baseline level in terms of ICC is not significantly different.

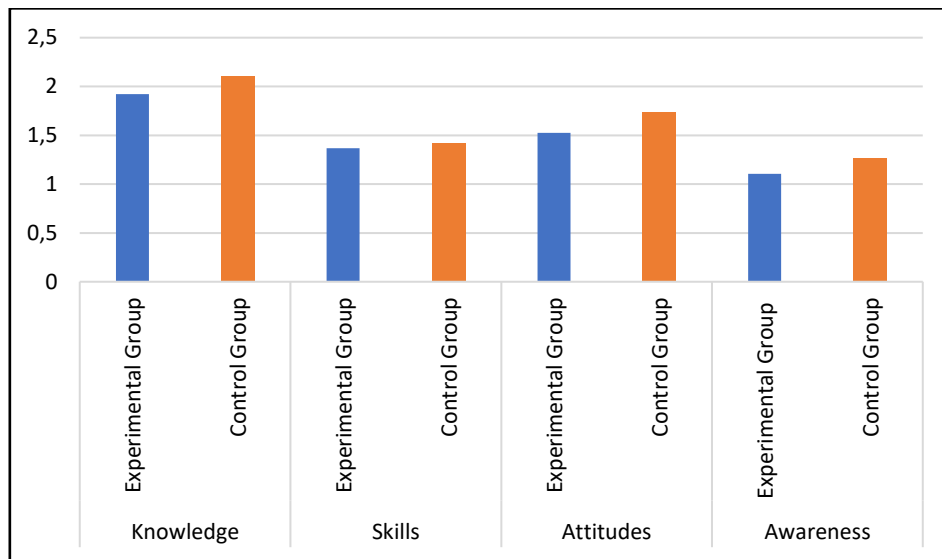
The obtained results suggest that the EG and the CG have comparable initial level prior to any teaching intervention. At this stage, the null hypothesis that entails no significant difference in students' baseline level is confirmed. Since the fourth research question investigates the specific aspects of ICC that can be enhanced through integrating TS in EFL classes, the pretest detailed scores that unfold the four ICC aspects were subjected to statistical analysis in SPSS.

Upon performing the independent samples t-test, valuable data were obtained. To start with, a descriptive analysis of the four components of ICC proficiency for both groups, including knowledge, skills, attitudes, and awareness have been considered.

Table 4.33*Pretest's Granular Descriptive Statistics of the Experimental Group and the Control Group*

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Knowledge	Experimental Group	38	1,9211	1,19417	,19372
	Control Group	38	2,1053	1,00779	,16349
Skills	Experimental Group	38	1,3684	,78572	,12746
	Control Group	38	1,4211	,82631	,13405
Attitudes	Experimental Group	38	1,5263	,89252	,14479
	Control Group	38	1,7368	1,17828	,19114
Awareness	Experimental Group	38	1,1053	,45259	,07342
	Control Group	38	1,2632	,68514	,11114

As shown in the previous table (table 4.33), the EG scores a mean of 1.9211 while the CG scores 2.1053 in the area of knowledge. Therefore, the mean difference, in term of knowledge which is 0.1842 indicates a slight difference between the two groups. Within the same aspect, Standard Deviation of the EG scored higher. This counting indicates a greater variability in knowledge score. Regarding skills, the mean ranks of both groups are proximate with a mean difference of 0.0527. Similarly, the mean difference of the EG and the CG in attitudes is 0.2105. As far as awareness is concerned, the CG mean is higher than the EG mean by a slight difference of 0.1571. However, the EG Standard Deviation has a narrower spread of scores in the aspect of awareness. To provide a clearer visualization of the table's numerical data, a clustered column graph was developed via excel 2023.

Figure 4.8*Pretest's Granular Descriptive Statistics*

The descriptive statistics, as shown in table 4.33 and figure 4.8, indicate minor differences in the pretest scores between the EG and the CG. To confirm that these results are statistically significant, an inferential test is highly required. Subsequently, an independent samples t-test was performed.

Table 4.34*Independent Samples T-test for the Pretest Granular Scores*

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		T-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Df	Std. Error Df	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Knowledge	Equal variances assumed	,849	,360	-,727	74	,470	-,18421	,25349	-,68929	,32087
	Equal variances not assumed			-,727	71,967	,470	-,18421	,25349	-,68953	,32111
Skills	Equal variances assumed	,325	,571	-,285	74	,777	-,05263	,18497	-,42119	,31593
	Equal variances not assumed			-,285	73,813	,777	-,05263	,18497	-,42121	,31595
Attitudes	Equal variances assumed	3,935	,051	-,878	74	,383	-,21053	,23979	-,68831	,26726
	Equal variances not assumed			-,878	68,943	,383	-,21053	,23979	-,68890	,26784
Awareness	Equal variances assumed	6,021	,016	-1,185	74	,240	-,15789	,13320	-,42331	,10752
	Equal variances not assumed			-1,185	64,126	,240	-,15789	,13320	-,42399	,10820

As displayed in table 4.34, all ICC aspects, including knowledge, skills, attitudes and awareness show no statistically significant difference between both groups as p is greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$); for knowledge ($p = 0.470$), Skills ($p = 0.777$), Attitudes ($p = 0.383$), and Awareness ($p = 0.240$). Notably, all of the aspects' scores exceeded the standard significant level ($\alpha = 0.05$).

These findings confirm that the EG and the CG were comparable at their baseline level of ICC across all the measured aspects. In short, the pretest data analysis indicates that the EG and the CG have a significant degree of homogeneity at all aspects. Subsequently, the null hypothesis is supported at the outset of the treatment.

4.2.2.2. Analysis and Results of the Experimental Phase

After administering the pretest to both groups, we immediately commenced on the intervention phase in which the TS materials were implemented. This phase of the quasi-experimental design laid a solid ground for collecting data that provided a comprehensive understanding for the longitudinal analysis.

Accordingly, the systematic progression of the treatment that consisted of four instructional segments, progress tests, and interviews provided ongoing insights into learners' developments in terms of intercultural communicative proficiency. It is worth mentioning that the analysis of the experimental phase is processed with regard to three main focuses, particularly observational notes of the sessions, and the findings of the progress tests, and the embedded interviews.

4.2.2.2.1. Instructional Unit One

To provide comprehensive and organized analyses of the obtained data, three main headings are included in this section. Namely, they are: Observational notes, analysis of the first progress test, and analysis of the embedded interview.

4.2.2.2.1.1. Observational Notes

During the first instructional unit, four TS materials were applied: *Star Wars*, *Harry Potter*, *Noblesse*, and *Lord of the Rings*. Through all the presented sessions, students in the EG were attentive and engaged. They perceived the designed activities as entertaining which, in fact, enhanced their willingness to learn about both their own culture and others' culture. only

two participants (S017 and S033) were passive in the first two sessions, they did not take part in almost all the activities.

After being exposed to the first instructional chunk, the students' engagement through class discussions and interactions revealed their abilities to identify key cultural elements. In Addition, when being introduced to cultural materials, students showed familiarity with facts about the TC like holidays, ceremonies, and customs. In different activities, participants demonstrated that they gained some comparative knowledge. For instance, they compared and contrasted emerging themes in the TS to similar ones that exist in their cultures.

Despite the fact that the EG participants were eager to develop their understanding of their own culture and others' culture, they exhibited negative attitudes towards otherness in many occasions. For better clarification, some instances are referred to. S016 said when being exposed to a scene in the webtoon of *Noblesse* in which the character was slurping noodles, "that's disgusting". In Japanese culture, slurping noodles is polite and shows of enjoyment. In similar incident, S032 noted that lanterns at the opening gates are religiously unaccepted in his local culture, believing that they are gates for devils. Therefore, it is important to note that this instructional unit is oriented to uniquely develop students' intercultural knowledge. Hence, low achievements in other ICC aspects were expected.

4.2.2.2.1.2. Results and Analysis of Progress Test 1

At the end of the first instructional chunk, students in both groups were assessed on their intercultural knowledge. Their performance was assessed through a written regular test. After exposing students to *The Hidden Fortress*, learners were asked to do two activities. The first part targets learners' ability to identify verbal and non-verbal cues in the Japanese culture. To evaluate students' understanding of similarities and differences in intercultural situation, another activity was designed in which students were asked to use a Venn Diagram to compare

and contrast their own culture with another paired culture. The table below shows the results of the first progress test.

Table 4.35

Results of the Experimental Group and Control Group's Progress Test 1

Students	Scores	Students	Scores	Students	Scores	Students	Scores
S001	5	S023	3	S045	1	S067	1
S002	3	S024	1	S046	3	S068	1
S003	3	S025	3	S047	1	S069	3
S004	3	S026	5	S048	3	S070	3
S005	5	S027	5	S049	1	S071	1
S006	5	S028	3	S050	1	S072	5
S007	5	S029	5	S051	1	S073	1
S008	3	S030	5	S052	1	S074	1
S009	3	S031	5	S053	1	S075	1
S010	5	S032	3	S054	3	S076	3
S011	5	S033	5	S055	3		
S012	5	S034	1	S056	1		
S013	3	S035	5	S057	1		
S014	3	S036	5	S058	3		
S015	1	S037	5	S059	3		
S016	3	S038	3	S060	1		
S017	1	S039	3	S061	1		
S018	5	S040	3	S062	1		
S019	5	S041	3	S063	1		
S020	5	S042	1	S064	3		
S021	5	S043	3	S065	5		
S022	5	S044	1	S066	3		

Note. S001 To S038: Experimental group

S039 to S076: Control group

As illustrated in table (4.35), the results of the first progress test that targets students' development of intercultural knowledge reveal remarkable differences between the EG and the CG. In this vein, the EG which was exposed to the teaching intervention demonstrates higher

scores as most of the participants scored either 3 or 5, while the CG which was taught through traditional teaching had lower scores that mostly registers 1 or 3. Accordingly, the EG mean score is largely higher than that of the CG scores. These initial findings of the first progress test are to be statistically analysed after finalizing all the progress tests through running a longitudinal analysis.

4.2.2.2.1.3. Results of the Embedded Interview

At the end of each instructional chunk, an interview (Appendix H) with one of the participants in the EG was conducted. Administering an individual interview aims at eliciting detailed insights into students' reflections, engagement, and emotions regarding the progression of the treatment. As such, S009 whose score was on the verge of the calculated mean of the first progress test was interviewed. Upon conducting the interview, prominent themes were highlighted.

➤ **Reflection on the First Instructional Unit.** The first question aims to solicit students' perceptions toward the advancement of the first instructional unit. Asking student to reflect on the first instructional segment, she revealed that learning about cultures through TS helped them make their knowledge more relatable. Overall, the student's reflection implied that the first instructional unit successfully processed and that the multimedia strategy was effective in integrating intercultural knowledge.

➤ **Refecation on Intercultural Understanding.** As a response to the second question, the respondent appreciated the role of TS in encouraging them to draw connections between their local culture and the cultures that were represented in the multimedia narratives. She specified that "... we were able to observe key similarities between other cultures and ours like family love, and the respect of traditions and religions. And we also see (have seen) key differences, mainly in religious sides". When asked if intercultural knowledge was enough to be interculturally competent, she totally agreed.

➤ **Engagement with TS.** According to the respondent, besides developing their intercultural knowledge, TS interestingly raised their motivation and kept them engaged. She literally said that “we were impatiently waiting for OE sessions”. The student expressed a lot of enjoyment, referring to the visual and interactive nature of TS. Hence, this implies that the integration of TS material sustained their interest and enthusiasm.

➤ **Suggestions for Improvement.** When asked the last question that enquires about suggestions from the part of the interviewee to consider in future intercultural units. Unexpectedly, she brought up “language adjustment”. To express it differently, she asked for a more simplified language or a glossary at the beginning of the lesson. Therefore, we decided to strengthen the pre-listening phase so as to well prepare students for further phases.

4.2.2.2.2. Instructional Unit Two

Following the same procedure as in the previous section, the analyses draw on three main elements. They include : Observational notes, analysis and results of the second progress test, analysis and results of the embedded interview.

4.2.2.2.2.1. Observational Notes

In the second instructional unit, four transmedia narratives were employed: *Lord of the Rings*, *Mulan*, *Bahubali*, and *Hunger Games*. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the second instructional unit is directed toward enhancing learners’ intercultural skills that encompass skills of interpreting and relating, and the skills of discovery and interaction. Delving deeper, students were very attentive in the first session, while they were watching the scenes and identifying the features of fantasy, and even in their engagement within the activities. In the second session, students were able to use their intercultural knowledge in depicting all kinds of stereotypes in *Lord of the Rings*. Within the same session, students were able to relate different cultural aspects with their local culture.

Similarly, students were able to relate bravery and patriotism in *Mulan* with their own cultural values. In lesson three, it became clear that students demonstrated high skills as they interculturally engaged in verbal and non-verbal communications. This, in fact, was apparent in the production phase of the third lesson. Despite the fact that all the mentioned acquired skills were consistent with all the lessons, students in the last session were critical to Indian culture, especially to the making of Indian movies. This was not observed in activities, but rather in their attitudes within plenary discussions.

4.2.2.2.2. Results of Progress Test 2

The second instructional unit ended with a progress test that aims at assessing students' achievements in regard with intercultural skills. Therefore, students in both groups were asked to perform multicultural group projects wherein they demonstrated how to respond to biased reactions and stereotypes. The table below (table 4.36) summarized the obtained results.

Table 4.36*Results of the Experimental Group and Control Group's Progress Test 2*

Students	Scores	Students	Scores	Students	Scores	Students	Scores
S001	5	S023	3	S045	1	S067	1
S002	5	S024	3	S046	3	S068	1
S003	1	S025	3	S047	1	S069	1
S004	1	S026	5	S048	3	S070	1
S005	5	S027	5	S049	1	S071	1
S006	5	S028	5	S050	3	S072	1
S007	3	S029	5	S051	1	S073	1
S008	3	S030	5	S052	1	S074	1
S009	3	S031	3	S053	1	S075	5
S010	5	S032	3	S054	3	S076	3
S011	5	S033	5	S055	1		
S012	3	S034	1	S056	1		
S013	3	S035	5	S057	1		
S014	5	S036	3	S058	3		
S015	1	S037	3	S059	3		
S016	3	S038	5	S060	1		
S017	3	S039	1	S061	1		
S018	5	S040	1	S062	3		
S019	5	S041	3	S063	1		
S020	3	S042	1	S064	3		
S021	5	S043	1	S065	1		
S022	5	S044	1	S066	3		

Note. **S001 To S038:** Experimental group

S039 to S076: Control group

Table (4.36) indicates that the EG demonstrated higher achievements in terms of the development of students' intercultural skills. By contrast, the CG achieved lower scores. The results initially reveal a remarkable difference between both groups.

4.2.2.2.2.3. The Interview

As in the first instructional chunk, an interview (Appendix H) with a participant in the EG was conducted to elicit detailed insights into students' reflections, engagement, and emotions regarding the progression of the treatment. Hence, S028 whose score was near the calculated mean of the progress test was interviewed. Four main themes were highlighted.

➤ **General Reflection.** Opening the interview with a question that targets the interviewee's reflection is vital in getting an overview of the progression of the second unit and, most importantly, in providing the respondent with the opportunity to bring forward participants' concerns without being guided. As a response to the first question, the student replied that he really enjoyed the sessions and found them different from their usual OE classes. He stated that "the stories made the lesson more alive. I felt that I was learning and exploring new cultures".

➤ **Intercultural Skills and their Applications.** In the context of this study, the development of intercultural skills emerged as a key theme during the interview. Intercultural skills, as defined by Byram's framework (1997), involve both the ability to interpret and relate cultural differences, and the ability to discover and interact in real-world effective communication. Thus, the second question of the interview seeks to explore the respondent's perceptions towards the development of their intercultural skills. Surprisingly, the interviewee was really conscious about it as he stated that through *Mulan*, he could see how values like family honour and duty are as important to Japanese as to his own culture. He went further to mention that he started considering connections instead of differences which made him more empathetic about others. He noted that "I now notice how much there to uncover".

➤ **Transmedia Narratives.** The question that was asked under this title addresses students' perceptions of the choice of TS materials and their application in the classroom. This is, in fact, critical for assessing their effectiveness in ensuring students' engagement and understanding of the content. In response to this, S028 answered that the narratives captured their attention. He added that engaging in the stories across the different media was a rich experience.

➤ **Recommendation.** Recommendations are crucial in indicating how students in the EG perceive the learning. The only suggestion that S028 made was mainly about their preferences of Mangas, Webtoons and Animations.

4.2.2.2.3. Instructional Unit Three

In keeping with the previous organization, three points are discussed in the following part. They involve : Observational notes, analysis of the third progress test, analysis of the embedded interview.

4.2.2.2.3.1. Observational Notes

In alignment with Byram's model of ICC (1997), the third instructional unit was designed to feature intercultural attitudes. As a key component of ICC, developing intercultural attitudes was addressed through the implementation of different stories across multiple media. Accordingly, we introduced them across the novel of *Twilight*, the movie of *Lord of the Rings*, and the digital engagement within the *Rockey Horror Show*. The unit was, in fact, challenging and required systematic planning as we observed some resistance and bias within students during the pre-experimental phase and during the progression of the first and the second instructional unit, except for the development of empathy.

At the outset, students were curious about the genres of the transmedia narratives as well as their cultural contexts. As the unit started, students became more critical towards the materials. At that phase, students were able to make use of their intercultural knowledge and skills while engaging with TS, or in the production phase where students synthesized their competencies in an interactive real communication. As the unit progressed, remarkable changes in students' attitudes were observed. Particularly, students demonstrated openness to unfamiliar cultural aspects.

Despite the fact that we worked on scaffolding the materials, some students found it challenging to be open to some unfamiliar practices, especially with *The Rockey Horror Show*.

At the end, we noted that students' dialogues progressed to become a space for successful intercultural interactions.

4.2.2.2.3.2. Results of Progress Test 3

To assess learners' intercultural attitudes, a third progress test was designed. It takes the form of scenario-based questions where learners had to choose the most appropriate response to the provided intercultural situations. Table (4.37) summarized learners' scores in the third progress test.

Table 4.37

Results of the Experimental Group and Control Group's Progress Test 3

Students	Scores	Students	Scores	Students	Scores	Students	Scores
S001	3	S023	5	S045	1	S067	1
S002	3	S024	3	S046	3	S068	3
S003	3	S025	1	S047	1	S069	5
S004	3	S026	3	S048	3	S070	3
S005	3	S027	5	S049	1	S071	1
S006	5	S028	5	S050	3	S072	1
S007	1	S029	3	S051	1	S073	3
S008	1	S030	3	S052	1	S074	1
S009	3	S031	3	S053	1	S075	3
S010	3	S032	5	S054	3	S076	1
S011	5	S033	5	S055	1		
S012	5	S034	1	S056	1		
S013	1	S035	3	S057	1		
S014	3	S036	3	S058	3		
S015	3	S037	3	S059	3		
S016	1	S038	5	S060	1		
S017	3	S039	3	S061	1		
S018	3	S040	1	S062	3		
S019	3	S041	1	S063	1		
S020	3	S042	3	S064	3		
S021	5	S043	1	S065	1		
S022	5	S044	1	S066	3		

Note. S001 To S038: Experimental group

S039 to S076: Control group

The third progress test shows that the EG outperformed the CG in intercultural attitudes. Higher scores in the EG compared to the CG indicate the effectiveness of the teaching

intervention in developing participants' intercultural attitudes. These results are to be subjected to statistical testing in subsequent stages.

4.2.2.2.3.3. The Interview

Following the same procedure and pursuing with the same aim, we conducted an interview with S036 at the end of the third instructional unit. Choosing different students for the embedded interview is required to capture different perspective, avoid bias, and make the findings more representative.

➤ **General Reflection.** When asked about the interviewee's general reflection regarding the third instructional unit, she directly highlighted her emotional connection with the content of the instructions. In this context, she described the experience as overwhelming and engaging.

➤ **Openness and Curiosity Toward Cultural Diversity.** As an answer to the second question, S036 declared that the "wild" connection between the different platforms made her ask more questions and be open to otherness. She specified that with *Rocky Horror Show*, she had identified cultural aspects that are not openly discussed in the Algerian culture, like individuality. She added that *Lord of the Rings* was a mixture of different values and traditions.

➤ **Impact of Narrative and Media Description.** The respondent reflected on how the selected transmedia narratives influenced their openness and curiosity toward diversity. She noted that they gave her a connection to cultural issues that she did not know before.

➤ **Recommendations.** Surprisingly, the student did not provide any specific recommendations. She just reflected overall satisfaction.

4.2.2.2.4. Instructional Unit Four

To keep the organizational patterns adopted with the previous units, the analyses and discussion in this section are structured around three main points. They are as follows : observational notes, the results of the fourth progress test, and the embedded interview.

4.2.2.2.4.1. Observational Notes

The fourth instructional segment is intended to develop students' critical awareness via TS. Critical cultural awareness, as identified by Byram (1997), is oriented towards enhancing language learners' ability to analyse and evaluate cultural documents and question stereotypes. To arrive at this stage of intercultural proficiency, acquiring intercultural knowledge, skills, and holding positive attitudes towards otherness is a prerequisite. To attain these objectives, three transmedia narratives were implemented, including *The Wire* (TV series), *Black Panther* (comic book), and *Dark Knight 13th* (documentary).

During the first session, students easily identified that the language that was used in the TV series *The Wire* is the African-American Vernacular English (AAVE). As the session proceeded, students demonstrated high proficiency in interpreting the materials, identifying key cultural aspects, and relating them to their own cultures. As such, students in the EG related concepts like bureaucracy, addiction, and capitalism in Western American culture to their local native culture. It is important to note that S021 enriched the session with his knowledge about institutions as he had a master degree in international law.

In the second and third sessions, students worked on the comic book *Black Panther*. Engaging in different designed activities, participants were aware of the fact that *Black Panther* challenges black superhero stereotypes. Moreover, they could highlight how the comic book presented the indigenous African culture in a positive way. Going through some digital engagements, students came to encounter that TS has changed the worldview of millions of its fans.

In the last two sessions, students of the EG were required to reflect on *The Dark Knight 13th* documentary through a perspective that relates their own cultural perspectives with others' worldview. This latter is considered the ultimate goal of interculturality to both of Kramersch

(1993) and Byram (1997). Being interculturally aware is vital in understanding the power of cultural dynamics in the making of social justice.

4.2.2.2.4.2. Results of Progress Test 4

Results of the last progressive test evaluates learners' ability to critically reflect on cultural differences, and consider diverse perspectives. Therefore, learners were asked to choose a document that they developed based on a checklist. Table (4.38) presented the scores of the fourth progress test.

Table 4.38

Results of the Experimental Group and Control Group's Progress Test 4

Students	Scores	Students	Scores	Students	Scores	Students	Scores
S001	5	S023	5	S045	3	S067	1
S002	5	S024	5	S046	3	S068	3
S003	3	S025	5	S047	1	S069	3
S004	5	S026	3	S048	3	S070	1
S005	3	S027	5	S049	1	S071	1
S006	5	S028	3	S050	3	S072	1
S007	3	S029	5	S051	1	S073	3
S008	3	S030	3	S052	1	S074	1
S009	3	S031	5	S053	1	S075	3
S010	3	S032	5	S054	1	S076	3
S011	5	S033	3	S055	1		
S012	5	S034	3	S056	1		
S013	3	S035	3	S057	1		
S014	5	S036	3	S058	1		
S015	3	S037	3	S059	3		
S016	1	S038	5	S060	1		
S017	1	S039	3	S061	1		
S018	3	S040	1	S062	3		
S019	1	S041	3	S063	1		
S020	5	S042	3	S064	3		
S021	5	S043	1	S065	1		
S022	3	S044	3	S066	3		

Note. S001 To S038: Experimental group

S039 to S076: Control group

The EG which undertook the teaching intervention demonstrates a higher concentration of scores. Their scores ranged between 3 and 5. On the contrary, the CG registers lower scores, ranging between 1 and 3.

4.2.2.2.4.3. The Interview

In the same way as in the other instructional segments, an interview was conducted with one student (S004) from the EG. This interview aims at gaining deeper insight into students' experience with our intercultural teaching.

➤ **Reflection on the Fourth Instructional Unit.** This first question (*What are your general impressions about the final unit on intercultural awareness?*) is an inquiry about the interviewee's general reflection on the fourth and last instructional segment. S004 assumed that the final unit was the most intense one. He went further to mention that each piece of the stories was unique and inspiring. She stated that: "I really like the session and I found myself thinking deeply about systemic issues in the other cultures".

➤ **Reflection on Intercultural Awareness.** the question item is phrased as follow: *Do you feel that this chunk has helped you develop your understanding of intercultural awareness?* The overtly expressed aim behind this question is to gain insights about the respondent's consciousness to the development of the learning process in terms of intercultural awareness. The students' response to this question implied that this unit helped her connect global issues to local ones. Therefore, she noted that she developed a more critical standpoint towards local culture and target culture.

➤ **Engagement with TS.** In response to the last question (*How did you engage with the different forms of TS in this unit?*), S004 shared her connections with the implemented materials. Particularly, she expressed that *The Wire* was eye-opening, while *Black Panther* was empowering and inspiring. She added that *13th* was a heavy documentary, but it made her curious about how systems of oppression function.

4.2.2.2.4. A Longitudinal Analysis of the Progress Tests Results

Analysing data over a period of time is vital in tracking participants' progress, measuring changes, and evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching intervention. Therefore, the obtained results from the four progress tests were subjected to in-depth analysis. In educational studies that investigate the development of ICC among students Mixed ANOVA Test is commonly used. However, applying the same test in our research would lead to statistical errors (Type I error). This is mainly because the progress tests were designed to test each separate aspects of ICC that was targeted separately in different instructional units. Moreover, the tested items (knowledge, skills, attitudes, and awareness) are correlated.

Instead, we subjected the results of the four progress tests to Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) via SPSS ver.25. This latter is practical in studies that intend to analyse the effect of the independent variable on these dependent variables over a period of time. At the outset, a statistical descriptive of the results was generated as in the following table (table 4.39)

Table 4.39

Statistical Descriptive of the Progress Tests' Scores

Tests	N	Group	Mean	Std. Deviation
Progress Test 1	38	Experimental Group	3,8947	1,37132
	38	Control Group	2,0000	1,20808
Progress Test 2	38	Experimental Group	3,7895	1,35881
	38	Control Group	1,6842	1,06809
Progress Test 3	38	Experimental Group	3,2632	1,32918
	38	Control Group	1,8947	1,10989
Progress Test 4	38	Experimental Group	3,7368	1,26671
	38	Control Group	1,8947	1,00779

It is apparent that the mean scores of the EG are higher than the CG scores across the four progress tests, with mean scores of 3.89, 3.79, 3.26, and 3.74, compared to the CG's mean scores of 2.00, 1.68, 1.89, and 1.89, respectively. The calculated Standard Deviations within each group are relatively similar in the four tests, which suggests that the internal variability in both groups is comparable. However, running further tests is highly required to statistically confirm these findings. In our study, we employed Levene Test that generated the following output (table 4.40).

Table 4.40

Levene Test of the Progress Tests Scores

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances^a				
	Levene	df1	df2	Sig.
Progress Test 1	,931	1	74	,338
Progress Test 2	,911	1	74	,300
Progress Test 3	,041	1	74	,840
Progress Test 4	2,495	1	74	,118

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept + Group

As mentioned before, the Levene Test was conducted to evaluate the homogeneity of variances for the progress tests across two different groups; the EG and the comparison group. As observed in the above table, the p-values that are based on the mean are greater than $\alpha=0.05$. Specifically, it is demonstrated that the p-values register 0.338, 0.330, 0.840, and 0.118 respectively. These results reveal that the variances between both groups have no significant difference, and therefore the assumption of homogeneity of variances is satisfied. In fact, these findings yield the ground for more statistical measures that would provide accurate analysis and interpretation of the obtained results.

In the context of MANOVA, performing a Multivariate Analysis is very important because it allows the researcher to measure the effect of the independent variable on more than one dependent variable across a period of time. Table 4.41 demonstrates the outputs of the Multivariate Analysis that was generated within MANOVA tables.

Table 4.41

Multivariate Analysis of the Progress Tests' Scores

Multivariate Tests ^a									
Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent . Parameter	Observed Power ^c
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	,920	204,487 ^b	4,000	71,000	,000	,920	817,948	1,000
	Wilks' Lambda	,080	204,487 ^b	4,000	71,000	,000	,920	817,948	1,000
	Hotelling's Trace	11,520	204,487 ^b	4,000	71,000	,000	,920	817,948	1,000
	Roy's Largest Root	11,520	204,487 ^b	4,000	71,000	,000	,920	817,948	1,000
Group	Pillai's Trace	,570	23,539 ^b	4,000	71,000	,000	,600	94,156	1,000
	Wilks' Lambda	,430	23,539 ^b	4,000	71,000	,000	,600	94,156	1,000
	Hotelling's Trace	1,326	23,539 ^b	4,000	71,000	,000	,600	94,156	1,000
	Roy's Largest Root	1,326	23,539 ^b	4,000	71,000	,000	,600	94,156	1,000

As shown in table (4.41), the p-value within the four multivariate tests (Pillai's Trace, Wilks' Lambda, Hotelling's Trace, Roy's Largest Root) $p=0.000$ which reveals a significant effect of the independent variable on the dependent variables. The Partial Squared registers 92% that shows that the 92% of variance in the dependent variable is attributed to the intercept which indicates a very strong effect.

For the group factor, the results are remarkably significant as the $p\text{-value}=0.000$ with an effect size of 60%. This suggests that the grouping factor has an impact on the dependent variable. The observed power for both the intercept and the group is 1.000 which ensures the

reliability of the test's results. Additionally, tests of Between-subjects Effects were used to see if there is a difference between groups across multiple dependent variables.

Table 4.42

Between-Subjects Effects of the Progress Tests' Results

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects									
Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^e
Corrected Model	PT1	68,211 ^a	1	68,211	40,845	,000	,356	40,845	1,000
	PT2	84,211 ^b	1	84,211	56,381	,000	,432	56,381	1,000
	PT3	35,579 ^c	1	35,579	23,731	,000	,243	23,731	,998
	PT4	64,474 ^d	1	64,474	49,213	,000	,399	49,213	1,000
Intercept	PT1	660,211	1	660,211	395,339	,000	,842	395,339	1,000
	PT2	569,263	1	569,263	381,135	,000	,837	381,135	1,000
	PT3	505,474	1	505,474	337,142	,000	,820	337,142	1,000
	PT4	602,579	1	602,579	459,949	,000	,861	459,949	1,000
Group	PT1	68,211	1	68,211	40,845	,000	,356	40,845	1,000
	PT2	84,211	1	84,211	56,381	,000	,432	56,381	1,000
	PT3	35,579	1	35,579	23,731	,000	,243	23,731	,998
	PT4	64,474	1	64,474	49,213	,000	,399	49,213	1,000

Across all the tests (PT1, 2, 3, 4) the p-value (sig.) are less than $\alpha = 0.05$ indicating statistically significant effects of the correlated model, intercept, and group. As for the correlated model, F-values range from 23.731 to 56.381. this implies that the model is strong in explaining variability. Concerning the intercept, it is significant for all dependent variable. The group differences are significant and identical to the correlated model.

4.2.2.3. Analysis and Results of the Post-test

After the treatment phase, a post-test was administered to participants in both the EG and the CG. Like the pretest, the post-test was divided into two parts. In the first part, students were asked to perform a play about an intercultural exchange event. In the second part of the test, students were interviewed. After a thorough analysis of the recorded play and interview,

we subjected the outcomes to the holistic rating scale. Therefore, the following scores (table 4.43) were obtained.

Table 4.43*Post-test Scores of the Experimental Group and the Control Group*

ID	Group	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes	Awareness	MeanStat	ID	Group	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes	Awareness	MeanStat
S001	1,00	3,00	5,00	5,00	5,00	4,50	S039	2,00	1,00	1,00	3,00	1,00	1,50
S002	1,00	3,00	3,00	5,00	5,00	4,00	S040	2,00	3,00	1,00	3,00	1,00	2,00
S003	1,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	5,00	3,50	S041	2,00	3,00	1,00	3,00	1,00	2,00
S004	1,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	5,00	3,50	S042	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00
S005	1,00	5,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	3,50	S043	2,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,50
S006	1,00	5,00	5,00	5,00	5,00	5,00	S044	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00
S007	1,00	3,00	5,00	3,00	3,00	3,50	S045	2,00	1,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	1,50
S008	1,00	5,00	3,00	1,00	3,00	3,00	S046	2,00	3,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	2,00
S009	1,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	S047	2,00	1,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	1,50
S010	1,00	5,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	3,50	S048	2,00	3,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	2,00
S011	1,00	5,00	5,00	5,00	5,00	5,00	S049	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00
S012	1,00	5,00	5,00	5,00	5,00	5,00	S050	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00
S013	1,00	3,00	5,00	3,00	3,00	3,50	S051	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00
S014	1,00	3,00	5,00	3,00	5,00	4,00	S052	2,00	1,00	1,00	3,00	1,00	1,50
S015	1,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	S053	2,00	1,00	1,00	3,00	1,00	1,50
S016	1,00	3,00	3,00	1,00	3,00	2,50	S045	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00
S017	1,00	3,00	3,00	1,00	3,00	2,50	S055	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	3,00	1,50
S018	1,00	5,00	5,00	3,00	3,00	4,00	S056	2,00	1,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	1,50
S019	1,00	5,00	5,00	3,00	1,00	3,50	S057	2,00	1,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	1,50
S020	1,00	5,00	5,00	3,00	5,00	4,50	S058	2,00	3,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	2,00
S021	1,00	5,00	3,00	5,00	5,00	4,50	S059	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00
S022	1,00	5,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	3,50	S060	2,00	1,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	2,50
S023	1,00	3,00	5,00	5,00	5,00	4,50	S061	2,00	1,00	1,00	3,00	1,00	1,50
S024	1,00	1,00	5,00	5,00	5,00	4,00	S062	2,00	1,00	1,00	3,00	3,00	2,00
S025	1,00	3,00	5,00	1,00	5,00	3,50	S063	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00
S026	1,00	5,00	5,00	3,00	3,00	4,00	S064	2,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	3,00	2,00
S027	1,00	5,00	3,00	5,00	5,00	4,50	S065	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00
S028	1,00	3,00	5,00	5,00	3,00	4,00	S066	2,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	3,00	2,00
S029	1,00	5,00	5,00	3,00	5,00	4,50	S067	2,00	1,00	1,00	3,00	1,00	1,50
S030	1,00	5,00	5,00	3,00	3,00	4,00	S068	2,00	1,00	3,00	1,00	3,00	2,00
S031	1,00	5,00	3,00	3,00	5,00	4,00	S069	2,00	1,00	5,00	1,00	3,00	2,50
S032	1,00	3,00	3,00	5,00	5,00	4,00	S070	2,00	1,00	1,00	3,00	1,00	1,50
S033	1,00	5,00	3,00	5,00	3,00	4,00	S071	2,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,00
S034	1,00	3,00	5,00	3,00	3,00	3,50	S072	2,00	5,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	2,00
S035	1,00	5,00	5,00	3,00	3,00	4,00	S073	2,00	3,00	1,00	3,00	1,00	2,00
S036	1,00	5,00	5,00	5,00	3,00	4,50	S074	2,00	3,00	1,00	1,00	1,00	1,50
S037	1,00	5,00	5,00	5,00	5,00	5,00	S075	2,00	3,00	1,00	3,00	3,00	2,50
S038	1,00	3,00	3,00	5,00	5,00	4,00	S076	2,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	3,00	2,50

Note. **Group 1** Experimental Group

Group 2 Control Group

As shown in table 4.43, students in the EG (n= 38) and the CG (n=38) were scored based on their ICC sub-element, including: Knowledge, skills, attitudes, and critical cultural awareness. The last column was generated by SPSS ver.25 to display the overall scores.

4.2.2.3.1. Analysis of the Post-test Results

H0: If Transmedia Storytelling is integrated in second-year OE syllabus at LTU, students' Intercultural Communicative Competence will not develop.

H1: If Transmedia Storytelling is integrated in second-year OE syllabus at LTU, students' Intercultural Communicative Competence will significantly develop.

To evaluate the impact of the implemented intervention and to test our hypotheses, the post-test's results were statistically analysed through SPSS ver.25 that helped draw evidence-based conclusions regarding the effectiveness of TS in developing learners' ICC at the Department of English at LTU. To provide a general overview of the group's comparison, the descriptive statistics of both the EG and the CG were derived. Hence, table (4.44) summarised the Mean, Standard Deviation, and St. error mean of both groups.

Table 4.44

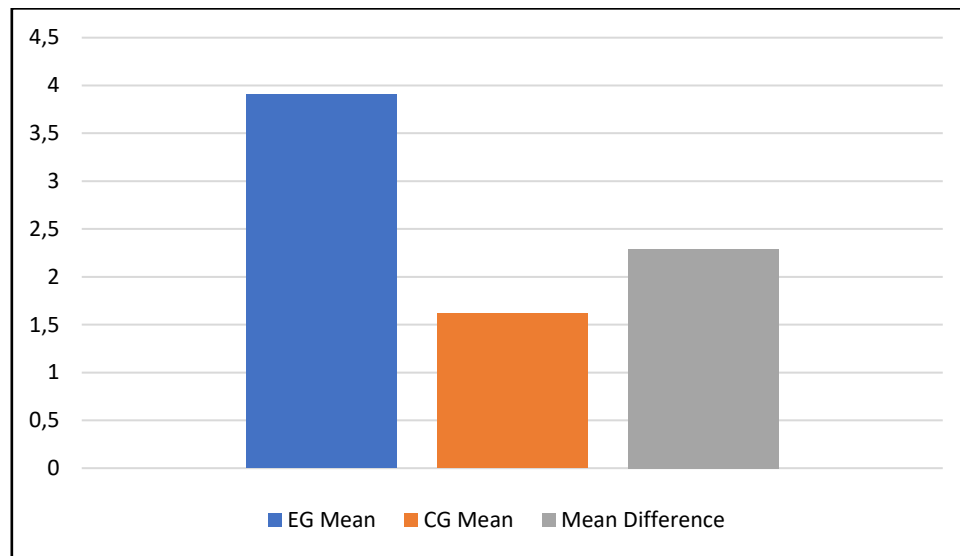
Post-test's Descriptive Statistics of the Experimental Group and the Control Group

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Experimental Group	38	3,9079	,64573	,10475
Control Group	38	1,6184	,48538	,07874

As observed in table (4.44), the mean of the EG has a value of 3.9079, while the CG registers 1.6184 with a 2.2895 difference in mean between both groups. The statistics illustrates that the EG outperforms the CG in the post-test as the mean of the EG is largely higher than the mean of the CG. As a result, we can note that the difference in mean is substantial. Concerning the Standard Deviation, the EG scores suggest a higher reliability as compared to the CG. Notably, both groups have low St. Error of Mean which reveals reliable mean estimates. To visualise the results, the following bar graph (4.18) was created using excel 2023.

Figure 4.9

The Mean Scores of the Experimental Group and the Control Group



The bar chart (Figure 4.19) compares the mean scores of both of the EG and the CG. Notably, the EG shows higher mean score than the CG with a mean difference of approximately 2,3. To confirm that the difference is statistically significant, an independent sample t-test is performed through SPSS which provides the following.

Table 4.45

Independent Samples T-test for the Post-test Scores

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std.Error Difference
Equal variances assumed	1.720	,194	17,471	74	,000	2,28947	,13104
Equal variances not assumed			17,471	68,694	,000	2,28947	,13104

The outputs from the independent samples t-test demonstrate that there is a significant difference in the means between the EG and the comparison group. To elaborate, Levene's Test for Equality of Variances has a value of $F=1.720$ and $p=0.194$. Registering these scores in Levene's Test ensures that the assumption of equal variances holds.

Vitality, the t-test generates $t=17.471$, $df=74$, and most importantly a significant level of p that equals 0.000 which is profoundly inferior to the standard significance of $\alpha=0.05$. Unquestionably, these statistical outputs ensure a meaningful difference in means of the EG and the CG. Moreover, the 95% confidence interval for the mean difference exceeds zero by a score between 2.28947 and 2.55059 that supports the statistical difference of the results.

To address the fourth research question, going through the post-test's detailed scores is deemed necessary. The detailed scoring specifies the outcomes across the four ICC dimensions, namely, knowledge, skills, attitudes, and awareness. Therefore, an independent sample t-test was run. At the outset, a descriptive analysis of the findings was created providing the following table (4.46).

Table 4.46

Post-test's Granular Descriptive Statistics of the Experimental Group and the Control Group

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Knowledge	Experimental Group	38	4,0000	1,11501	,18088
	Control Group	38	1,7368	1,08264	,17563
Skills	Experimental Group	38	4,1053	1,00779	,16349
	Control Group	38	1,6316	1,05064	,17044
Attitudes	Experimental Group	38	3,5789	1,30760	,21212
	Control Group	38	1,6842	,96157	,15599
Awareness	Experimental Group	38	3,9474	1,11373	,18067
	Control Group	38	1,4211	,82631	,13405

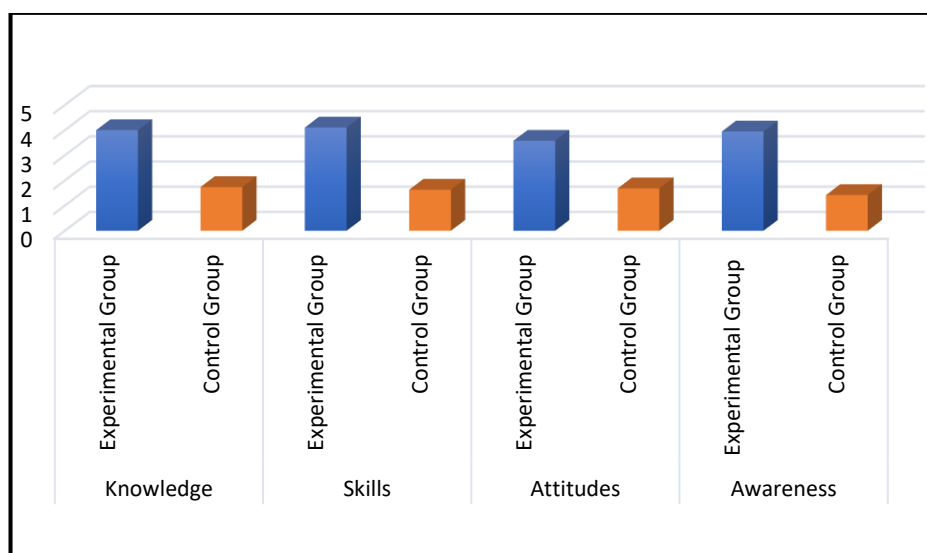
As observed in table 4.46, the differences in means between the EG and the CG are apparent in the detailed scores. To start with, the EG outperforms the CG by a mean difference of 2.2632. Similarly in the intercultural skills rubric, the EG scored a mean of 4.1053 whereas the CG scored well below the EG, scoring a mean of 1,6316. Concerning the third dimension of attitudes, the EG registers a mean of 3.5789, while the CG's mean is 1.6842. The

outperformance of the EG is also apparent in the dimension of awareness as the mean score in the EG is higher by 2.5263 mean difference.

Variability can be best seen in the Standard Deviation outputs, throughout which we can easily note that the EG revealed greater variability in results, potentially indicating differing levels of impact among participants. Furthermore, the Smaller standard errors indicate that the sample size of the groups (38 participants in each group) created stable mean estimates that validates the statistically significant difference between groups. To visualise the findings, we generated a clustered column graph (Figure 4.20), using excel 2023.

Figure 4.10

Pretest's Granular Descriptive Statistics



These findings suggest that the intervention (TS) that was used in the EG has a positive impact on improving participants' outcomes (ICC development) at the Department of English at LTU. However, further statistical tests are needed to confirm this result. Therefore, we performed an independent sample t-test which generated the following table (table 4.47).

Table 4.47*Independent Samples T-test for the Post-test Granular Scores*

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances				t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. 2- tailed	Mean Df	Std. Error Df	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper	
Knowledge	Equal variances assumed	,841	,362	8,977	74	,000	2,26316	,25212	1,76081	2,76551
	Equal variances not assumed			8,977	73,936	,000	2,26316	,25212	1,76080	2,76552
Skills	Equal variances assumed	1,103	,297	10,474	74	,000	2,47368	,23617	2,00311	2,94426
	Equal variances not assumed			10,474	73,872	,000	2,47368	,23617	2,00309	2,94428
Attitudes	Equal variances assumed	3,664	,059	7,196	74	,000	1,89474	,26330	1,37010	2,41937
	Equal variances not assumed			7,196	67,962	,000	1,89474	,26330	1,36932	2,42015
Awareness	Equal variances assumed	17,252	,000	11,230	74	,000	2,52632	,22497	2,07806	2,97457
	Equal variances not assumed			11,230	68,262	,000	2,52632	,22497	2,07743	2,97520

As mentioned, the results were purposefully subjected to SPSS ver.25 to compute the test and to provide statistical evidence of the difference between the EG and the CG across the four dimensions. Considering knowledge, the equal variances are assumed as F equals 0.841 with a sig. of 0.362 in the Levene's Test. Within the same dimension, the t-test indicates a statistically significant difference in means between the EG and the CG as it registers a p-value of 0.000 which is well below $\alpha = 0.05$. The large difference in means between both groups

ensures the effectiveness of the intervention (TS) in developing students' intercultural knowledge at the Department of English at LTU.

Likely, in skills, the equal variances are assumed within Levene's Test ($F=1.103$, $\text{sig.}=0.297$). Under T-test for Equality of Means, the p-value measures 0.000 so that we can confidently note that the EG significantly overachieves the CG, in terms of intercultural skills. Once more, the intervention is proved effective in developing students' intercultural skills at the Department of English at LTU.

In attitudes, Levene's Test supports equal variances as it is demonstrated that $p=0.059$. Like in the two first dimensions, the t-test highlights statistically significant difference ($t(47)=7.196$, $p<0.001$) in favour of the EG. Thus, implementing TS is effective in developing students' intercultural attitudes at the Department of English at LTU.

For awareness, the results of the Levene's Test indicate unequal variance as ($p<0.001$). Therefore, the unequal variances t-test was used. Notably, the t-test p-value measures 0.000 which implies that the EG had remarkably higher awareness scores than the CG, emphasizing the strong effect of the intervention on awareness.

In a nutshell, these results reveal that the EG consistently outperformed the comparison group in all the ICC aspects. Hence, it can be declared that the intervention (TS) is proved effective in enhancing students' ICC at the Department of English at LTU. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis that assumes that TS, if integrated in the OE syllabus at the Department of English at LTU, will develop students' ICC is confirmed.

4.2.2.4. Paired Samples T-test of the Performance of the Experimental Group on the Pre-test and Post-test

To highlight the differences in the EG's performance in the pretest and post-test, a paired samples t-test was conducted. Prior to analysing the paired t-test, considering the

descriptive statistics is highly valuable as it compares the means ranks of the EG in the pretest and in the post-test.

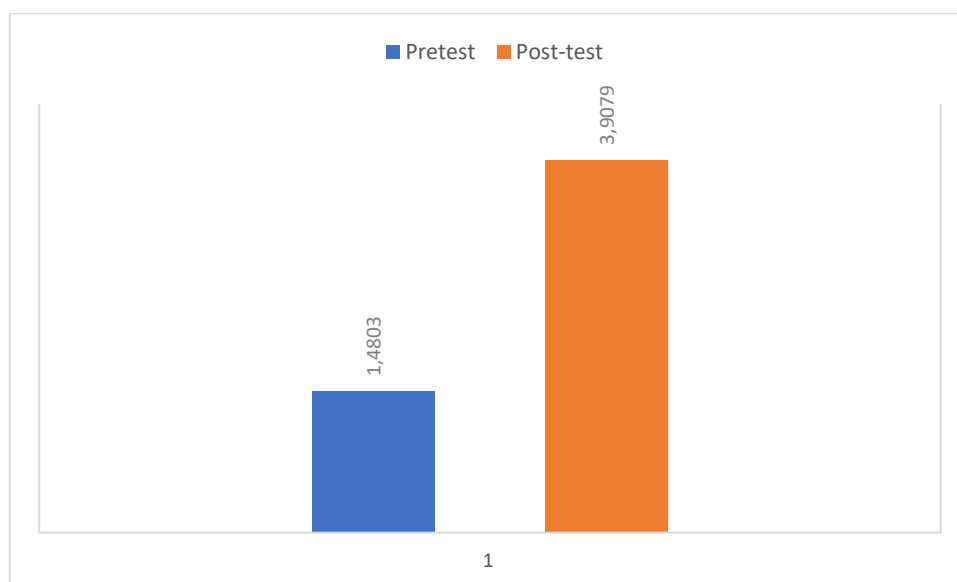
Table 4.48

Paired Samples Statistics of the Experimental Group Pretest and Post-test Scores.

		N	Mean	Std.	Std. Error
Experimental Group	Pretest	38	1,4803	,70802	,11486
	Post-test		3,9079	,64573	,10475

Figure 4.11

Paired Samples Statistics of Both Groups' Pretest and Post-test



From the previous table (Table 4.48), a clear difference in the mean score is observed as the mean of the EG in the pretest is 1.4803, while it registers 3.9079 in the post-test. With a simple calculation, we find that the mean difference is 2.4276. Therefore, it is indicated through the paired descriptive statistics that implementing TS is effective in developing students' ICC at the Department of English at LTU. However, maintaining this conclusion requires another statistical measure to confirm that the differences are statistically significant.

Table 4.49*Paired Samples T-test of the Experimental Group's Pretest and Post-test*

95% Confidence Interval of the Difference						
	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pretest/Post-test	,14451	-2,72045	-2,13482	-16,799	37	,000

The paired sample t-test indicates a statistically significant improvement in the EG's performance based on the comparison between the pretest and the post-test scores. These findings reveal that the mean difference was significantly higher, with a t-value of -16.799 (df = 37, $p < 0.001$) that represents a large effect. A small standard deviation of the differences (0.89) shows that the improvement was consistent across participants, while the standard error mean (0.14) indicates that this mean is a precise estimate. Furthermore, the 95% confidence interval for the mean difference, from -2.72 to -2.13, does not include zero, which again confirms statistical significance.

4.2.2.5. Paired Samples T-test of the Performance of the Control Group on the Pre-test and Post-test

To examine the differences in the CG's performance in the pretest and post-test, a paired samples t-test was conducted. This test helps the researcher determine if there was any significant change in the CG's performances at two distinct time points in the absence of the treatment. Thus, table 4.50 was generated.

Table 4.50*Paired Samples Statistics of the Control Group's Pretest and Post-test Scores*

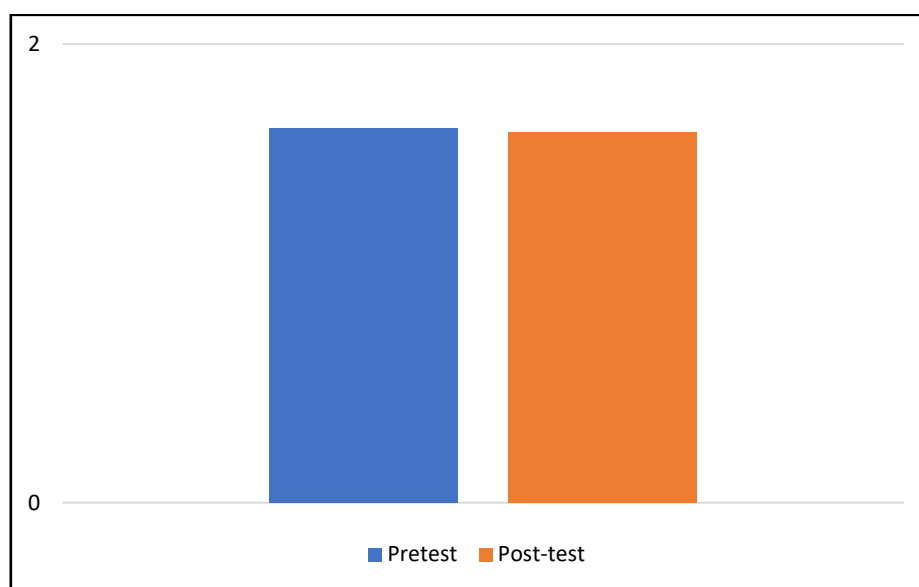
		N	Mean	Std.	Std. Error
Control Group	Pretest	38	1,6316	,67468	,10945
	Post-		1,6184	,48538	,07874

As displayed in table 4.50, the paired sample t-test of the CG's pretest and post-test scores clearly shows no significant difference between the two time points. Specifically, the

pretest mean score is 1.6316, while the post-test mean score is 1.6184. As a matter of fact, there is minimal difference between the means of the CG in the pretest and post-test time points. Keeping the same level of performance in the two-time tests can be best seen in the bar graph below.

Figure 4.12

The Control Group's Pretest and Post-test Mean Scores



The above figure (Figure 4.22) displays the CG's pretest and Post-test mean scores. Visually, the bars appear identical which indicates that there was no significant change at the different time points (before and after the teaching intervention). To confirm the obtained results from the t-test descriptive statistics, a t-test was performed which generated table 4.51.

Table 4.51

Paired Samples T-test of the Control Group's Pretest and Post-test

95% Confidence Interval of the Difference						
	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pretest/Post-test	,14666	-,28401	-,31033	,090	37	,929

By running a t-test, we can say that the p-value registers above alpha=0.05. Furthermore, the 95% confidence interval for the mean difference ranges from -0.28401 to -

0.31033, which includes zero. These measures further support the conclusion that there is no significant difference between the pretest and post-test scores. Remarkably, these results indicate that the CG did not experience any significant improvement or decline in their performance.

4.2.2.6. Interpretation of the Pretest, Progress Tests, and Post-test

The current study is intended to investigate the efficacy of integrating TS in OE syllabi in developing EFL learners' ICC. For this reason, a quasi-experimental design that entails a pretest, progress tests, and post-test was adopted. Accordingly, 76 students enrolled in second year license at the Department of English at LTU formed the basis of our research sample. Only the EG (n=38) was subjected to the treatment (TS-intensive course).

To examine and evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention and test the hypotheses, both groups underwent a pretest, progress tests, and a post-test. The findings of each were presented and thoroughly analysed in previous sections. To effectively contextualise the findings and transform data into valuable knowledge, the obtained results require a clear interpretation.

By administering the pretest to both the EG and the CG for the sake of evaluating students' initial levels in terms of ICC, the researcher arrived through analysing the pretest scores of both groups to the result that participants in the EG and CG have comparable baseline level prior to the treatment phase. This was ensured primarily through comparing the mean ranks of the EG and the CG of the pretest, and was, then, statistically confirmed by performing a t-test in which the p-value registered 0.343 that was higher than the standard significant level $\alpha=0.05$. Therefore, it was confirmed that there was no statistically significant difference between both groups' initial level of intercultural proficiency.

The pretest's findings align with the research notable gap and support its target in identifying an educational pedagogy that would enhance learners' ICC. Expectedly, the

participants' low level in terms of ICC is compatible with disjointing the intercultural dimension from second-year OE syllabus at the Department of English at LTU that was similarly observed in teachers' practices as well.

Beside arguing the significant gap in the OE syllabus and in teachers' practices, the pretest analysis findings further support Komorowska (2006) standpoint which held that properly integrating ICC in language curricula and syllabi offers a comprehensive framework for teachers to design their own intercultural materials. Thus, isolating ICC aspects from language courses can be seen in students' low global competencies. Overall, the pretest's results confirm our null hypothesis which entails that there is no significant difference in knowledge, skills, attitudes, or awareness of the participants before the intervention. Hence, the alternative hypothesis is rejected at that phase.

Unlike the CG, the EG was subjected to the treatment. As mentioned before, TS was implemented within the EG while the CG was taught with employing a placebo. Within the treatment phase, four progress tests were conducted at the end of each instructional unit. The results of the progress tests track the impact of the intervention. According to the obtained results of the t-test, we indicate a statistically significant difference between the EG and the CG across the four aspects of ICC. Therefore, implementing TS in the OE course develops the four aspects of ICC at different points of time.

To measure the comprehensive change, a post-test was conducted for both groups. The findings demonstrate that there is a significant difference in the means between the EG and the comparison group as the t-test generated $t=17.471$, $df=74$. Undoubtedly, these statistical outputs ensure a meaningful difference in means of the EG and the CG. The t-test was double conducted in order to separately consider the development of each dimension of ICC. Across the four dimensions, the p-value registers 0.000 which indicates that there is a significant difference in the mean ranks of the EG and the CG.

The findings from the paired sample t-test indicate that there was a significant development in the EG's performance from the pretest to the post-test. The mean difference of -2.43 suggests that, on average, participants performed better on the post-test than the pretest. This improvement is statistically significant, as the p-value is less than 0.000. However, performing the same test with the CG's scores, it was revealed that the CG did not indicate any improvement or decline in their performances. Statistically speaking, the pretest mean score was 1.6316, while the post-test mean score was 1.6184.

Consequently, the alternative hypothesis positing that "if TS is integrated in second-year OE syllabus at LTU, ICC will significantly develop" is confirmed. Consequently, the evidence-based data is well-established to address our third research question. As Such, we can confidently note that TS is an effective pedagogical tool that enhances students' ICC at the Department of English at LTU. In support of these findings, Harji (2017) reported that a period of 16-week treatment in which digital storytelling project was applied has proven effective in enhancing EFL students' language outputs.

Drawing on the theoretical models of ICC that were established in the literature mainly Byram's (1997) and Kramsch (1997) intercultural models, the experiment was organized around the core ICC components which were statistically assessed in all the experiment's phases. Based on the obtained results, a robust response to the fourth research question is provided, highlighting that the four ICC aspects that TS enhances are namely: Intercultural knowledge, intercultural skills, intercultural attitudes, and critical cultural awareness.

4.2.3. The Post-experimental Phase

At the end of the experiment, a post-treatment questionnaire was administered to both the EG and the CG. It aims at assessing the changes in participants' perceptions and experiences. Unlike the post-test which is an outcome-based test, the post-treatment

questionnaire is an experience-based test that is intended to measure students' shifts in attitudes towards ICC through comparing obtained data from both the EG and the CG.

4.2.3.1. Validity and Reliability Assessments of Students' Attitudinal Questionnaire

To ensure the validity and reliability of the attitudinal questionnaire, statistical tests were performed. To start with, a Correlation Analysis (using the Spearman Correlation Coefficient) was performed in order to assess the questionnaire's internal consistency validity. Accordingly, table 4.52 was generated by an R programming.

Table 4.52

The Results of the Correlation Analysis of Students' Attitudinal Questionnaire

Items	Correlations	P-value
Item 1 to 3	0.97	0.00.
Item 4 to 17	0.97	0.000
Item 8 to 12	0.99	0.000
Item 13 to 14	0.96	0.000
Item 17 to 18	0.90	0.001

Note. Level of Significance at 0.01

Table 4.52 illustrates the Correlation Analysis of the students' attitudinal questionnaire's items. The measured correlations are highly significant, ranging between 0.90 to 0.99 which indicate that all the measures are above the standard level of 0.08. Furthermore, the p-value across all the items is well below the significant level ($p < 0.01$). This measurement confirms that the correlations are unlikely due to chance. Subsequently, the findings indicate an excellent internal validity.

To assure the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's Alpha test was executed. Upon running the Cronbach's Alpha value, we found that the index reliability of this tool is 0.96. This demonstrates excellent measurement to validate the reliability of the questionnaire as a research tool.

4.2.3.2. Analysis and Results of the Attitudinal Questionnaire

After ensuring the validity and reliability of our questionnaire as an appropriate tool to measure students' attitudes at the end of the experimental phase, analysing and interpreting the results is our subsequent step. It is worth mentioning that the response rate of the questionnaire is 86.84% within the EG, and 89.47% within the CG, which is a highly significant rate. To get comparable data and facilitate the analyses, the responses are grouped in terms of ICC aspects. To start with, table 4.53 entails respondents' perspectives in relation to intercultural knowledge.

Table 4.53

Students' Perspectives on Intercultural Knowledge

Items	Experimental Group	The Control Group
1. I understand the key differences between my local culture and others' culture	Strongly Agree 10(30.30%)	Strongly Agree 2 (5.71%)
	Agree 11 (30.61%)	Agree 14 (40%)
	Undecide 7 (20%)	Undecide 5 (14.29%)
	Disagree 3(9.09%)	Disagree 9 (25.71%)
	Strongly Disagree 0(00%)	Strongly Disagree5(14.29%)
2. I can identify cultural diversities.	Strongly Agree 17(51.52%)	Strongly Agree 3(8.57%)
	Agree 15(45.45%)	Agree16(45.71%)
	Undecide1 (3.03%)	Undecide8(22.86%)
	Disagree 0(00%)	Disagree7(20%)
	Strongly Disagree 0(00%)	Strongly Disagree 0(00%)
3. I understand how values, history, and traditions shape cultural perspectives.	Strongly Agree 25(75.76%)	Strongly Agree 2(5.71%)
	Agree 3(9.09%)	Agree6(17.14%)
	Undecide 5(15.15%)	Undecide4(11.43%)
	Disagree 0(00%)	Disagree8(22.86%)
	Strongly Disagree 0 (00%)	Strongly Disagree15(42.82%)

The obtained results from the first grouped items under the key headings "knowledge" reveal that there is a significant shift in the EG's perceptions of intercultural knowledge. Particularly, 30.30% of the EG's respondents strongly agreed that they understand key cultural differences with no disagreement (00%), while only 5.71% of the participants in the CG

reported that they strongly agreed with the majority of them (42.82%) disagreeing. In terms of cultural diversities, 51.52% of the EG strongly agreed with no report of disagreement, while only 8.57% strongly agreed. Regarding the third item, similar results were obtained. As such, the majority of the EG's respondents (75.76%) reported that they strongly agreed on item three, whereas few participants within the CG (5.71%) agreed, and 42.82% of them disagreed.

To ensure that the findings are statistically significant, the Chi-square Analysis is performed for the combined categories. For item one, the Chi-square value is 20.85 with a p-value of 0.0001. As far as item two is concerned, the Chi-square registers 22.27 with p-value of 0.000057. Concerning the Chi-square and p-value of the third item, they respectively measure 43.68 and 0.0000176. Since all the measured p-values are well below the standard significant level 0.05, it is indicated that the differences between the EG and CG across all the items are statistically significant. The findings demonstrated the effectiveness of the treatment in enhancing students' intercultural knowledge at the Department of English at LTU, and shifting their attitudes towards tolerating cultural diversities.

Table 5.54*Students' Perspectives on Intercultural Skills*

Items	Experimental Group	Control Group
4. I can interpret non-verbal communication in an intercultural setting	Strongly Agree: 13(39.39%)	Strongly Agree:2(5.71%)
	Agree:19(57.58%)	Agree: 4(11.43%)
	Undecide:1(3.03%)	Undecide: 17(48.57%)
	Disagree:0(00%)	Disagree: 7(20%)
	Strongly Disagree:0(00%)	Strongly Disagree:5(14.29%)
5. I can adjust my communication style in accordance to different cultural context	Strongly Agree:13(39.39%)	Strongly Agree:2(5.71%)
	Agree:12(36.36%)	Agree: 3(8.57%)
	Undecide:6(18.18%)	Undecide:8(22.86%)
	Disagree: 1(3.03%)	Disagree:18(51.43%)
	Strongly Disagree:0(00%)	Strongly Disagree:4(11.43%)
6. I can resolve cultural misunderstanding	Strongly Agree: 18(54.55%)	Strongly Agree:0(00%)
	Agree:13(39.39%)	Agree:2(5.71%)
	Undecide:1(3.03%)	Undecide:3(8.57%)
	Disagree: 0(00%)	Disagree: 14(40%)
	Strongly Disagree:1(3.03%)	Strongly Disagree:16(45.71%)
7. I can analyse cultural practices without bias	Strongly Agree: 27(81.82%)	Strongly Agree: 6(22.86%) -
	-Agree: 2(6.06%)-	Agree:8(22.86%) -
	Undecide: 3(9.09%) -	Undecide:2(5.71%) -
	Disagree: 1(3.03%) -	Disagree: 9(25.71%) -
	Strongly Disagree:0(00%)	Strongly Disagree:10(25.557%)

Analysing the four items that are related to skills reveals significant differences between the EG and the CG. Regarding non-verbal communication, 96.97% of the EG's respondents expressed confidence by ticking either "Agree" or "Strongly Disagree", compared to only 17.14% in the CG who agreed on their skills in interpreting non-verbal clues. In terms of the ability to adjust communication styles to different cultural contexts, 75.75% of the EG strongly agreed, whereas 85.72% of the CG reported undecided or disagreed. Concerning resolving

cultural misunderstandings, 93.94% of the EG agreed on acquiring this skill, while 85.71% of the CG disagreed. Moreover, 87.88% of the EG reported that they could analyse cultural practices, while over half of the CG expressed disagreement.

To confirm that these differences are statistically significant, the Chi-square test was undertaken. As such, the four items respectively measure 46.94, 34.02, 35.47, 36.18 with a p value 0.0001 across all items. Based on the p value, all items show a significant difference between the two groups. Therefore, these findings confirm the intervention's efficacy in shifting students' perspectives and enhancing their experiences in terms of intercultural skills at the Department of English at LTU.

Table 4.55

Students' Perspectives on Intercultural Attitudes

Items	Experimental Group	Control Group
8. I feel confident to interact with people from different culture.	Strongly Agree:20(60.61%)	Strongly Agree:10(28.57%)
	Agree:8(24.24%)	Agree: 10(28.57%)
	Undecide:5(15.15%)	Undecide:5(14.29%)
	Disagree: 0(00%)	Disagree: 4(11.43%)
	Strongly Disagree:0(00%)	Strongly Disagree:6(17.41%)
9. I appreciate cultural diversities	Strongly Agree:23(69.70%)	Strongly Agree: 4(11.43%)
	Agree:7(21.21%)	Agree:2(5.71%)
	Undecide:2(6.06%)	Undecide: 3(8.57%)
	Disagree:0(00%)	Disagree:18(51.43%)
	Strongly Disagree:1(3.03%)	Strongly Disagree:8(22.86%)
10. I believe that differences empower personal experiences	Strongly Agree:30(90.91%)	Strongly Agree: 8(22.86%)
	Agree:3(9.09%)	Agree: 12(34.29%)
	Undecide: 0(00%)	Undecide: 9(25.71%)
	Disagree:0(00%)	Disagree:5(14.29%)
	Strongly Disagree:0(00%)	Strongly Disagree: 1(2.86%)
11. I am open to other cultural practices	Strongly Agree:15(45.45%)	Strongly Agree: 0(00%)
	Agree:15(45.45%)	Agree:3(8.57%)
	Undecide: 1(3.03%)	Undecide:2(5.71%)
	Disagree:2(6.06%)	Disagree: 16 (45.71%)
	Strongly Disagree:0(00%)	Strongly Disagree:14(40%)
12. I am curious and not judgemental towards otherness	Strongly Agree:26(78.79%)	Strongly Agree: 2(5.75%)
	Agree:5(15.15%)	Agree: 6(17.14%)
	Undecide: 2(6.06%)	Undecide: 10(28.75%)
	Disagree:0(00%)	Disagree:8 (22.86%)
	Strongly Disagree:0(00%)	Strongly Disagree: 9(25.71%)

The above table shows higher percentages within the EG in the first two scales (strongly agree and agree), compared to the CG. Respondents in the EG demonstrated higher confidence in intercultural interactions (84.85% agreements vs 57.14% in the CG). Similarly, the EG's

participants had a stronger appreciation for cultural diversities than the CG (90.91% agreement in the EG Vs 74.29% disagreement in the CG). The EG also recognized the value of cultural differences and openness to other culture with much greater percentages in the scale of strongly agree and agree.

The chi-square analysis for attitudes shows that the chi-square value and p-value in the five items are respectively (13.51/p=0.0037, 39.47/p=0.000, 33.11/p=0.000, 47.82/p=0.000, 42.97/p=0.000). As all p-values are well below the significance level 0.05, it indicates that there are statistically significant differences between the experimental and control groups across all items. These results confirm that the teaching intervention is effective on participants' attitudes, including increased confidence, appreciation, openness, and curiosity toward cultural diversity.

Table 4.56

Students' Perspectives on their Behaviour

Items	Experimental Group	Control Group
13. I seek opportunities to engage with individuals from different cultural contexts	Strongly Agree: 30(90.91%)	Strongly Agree: 9(25.71%)
	Agree: 2(6.06%)	Agree:8(22.86%)
	Undecide:1(3.03%)	Undecide: 12(34.29%)
	Disagree:0(00%)	Disagree: 5(14.29%)
	Strongly Disagree:0(00%)	Strongly Disagree:1(2.86%)
14. I encourage collaboration between people from diverse cultural backgrounds.	Strongly Agree: 26(78.79%)	Strongly Agree:2(5.71%)
	Agree: 2(6.06%)	Agree: 4(11.43%)
	Undecide: 5(15.15%)	Undecide: 18(51.43%)
	Disagree:0(00%)	Disagree: 10(28.57%)
	Strongly Disagree:0(00%)	Strongly Disagree: 1(2.86%)

The attitudinal scale's results highlight a significant difference between the experimental and control groups regarding intercultural engagement. In response to item 13, the EG showed strong support with 90.91% strongly agreeing on engaging with individuals from different cultural contexts. On the contrary, the CG had only 25.71% of them strongly agreeing, with a large percentages (34.29%) undecided and 17.15% disagreeing. Similarly in

item 14, the EG also demonstrated strong support of intercultural collaborations (78.79% strongly agreed), while the CG showed lower support, with only 5.71% strongly agreeing, and 31.43% disagreeing.

To ensure that the calculated percentages are statistically significant, the chi-square test was conducted. Accordingly, it provided the measures 64.94, 32.01, 34.66, 37.14 with a p value 0.0001 respectively across all items. Thus, the EG is more interculturally engaged and willing to collaborate with people who are from different cultures.

In a nutshell, the attitudinal questionnaire highlights the difference between the EG and the CG. To elaborate, the EG demonstrated favourable attitudes across all the intercultural aspects, including: Knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviour. The CG, on the contrary, shows less support for intercultural competence. These differences were statistically proved to be attributed to the implementation of the intervention. Previous studies within the literature emphasized the effectiveness of interventions in enhancing intercultural competence, noting that programmes yield significant attitudinal shifts in participants (Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2006). Comparatively, control groups in similar studies typically demonstrated limited progress in intercultural awareness and attitudes (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009).

Conclusion

This chapter provided thorough analyses, discussion, and interpretations of the obtained data within both the exploratory phase and the explanatory phase. Qualitative data analyses that consisted of document analysis, observations of teachers' practices, and the interview with the MESRS inspectors directly answered our first and second research questions. Within the explanatory phase, the collected data by means of the administered questionnaires and the quasi experiment were quantitatively analysed. The results of the pre-test, progress tests, and post-test addressed our third and fourth research questions, and concurrently tested our research hypotheses. Through analysing and interpreting the entrance and the post-treatment

questionnaires, the researcher could address the shift in students' attitudes. Based on these findings, conclusions, recommendations, and implications are provided in the coming chapter.

Chapter Five: Conclusions, Recommendations, and Implications

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Introduction

This chapter is the culminating stage of the research. It finalizes the study by providing a critical synthesis of the findings and their implications. As a starting point, this chapter presents the key conclusions of the study in light of the research questions and the stated objectives. This implies that a straightforward answer for each research question is provided and connected with research findings. Under the heading '*Implications*', the significance and the impact of our findings are thoroughly discussed. Based on these implications, we suggest some recommendations both for teaching practices and for policy plannings and decisions. Following this, the chapter acknowledges the limitations and delimitations of the study and, hence, offers insightful suggestions for future research. Overall, this chapter intends to provide a final closure to the current research and to frame future exploration in the field of study.

5.1. Conclusions

In this section, the research questions that guided us throughout the course of the study are addressed and clearly answered. Based on the findings that were presented, analysed, and interpreted in the previous chapter, each research question is revisited and critically approached. As such, this first section intends to provide both evidence-based answers to the research questions and a comprehensive understanding of the objectives that were stated in the general introduction.

In addition, the upcoming conclusions revisit the alignment of the findings with the reviewed literature and similar studies in the field. As noted earlier, the document analysis and the interview with the MESRS inspector answered the first research question, findings from the classroom observations answered the second research question, and the obtained results from the experiment and the questionnaires addressed the third and fourth research questions.

5.1.1. Conclusions for Research Question 1: Do Policymakers and Stakeholders, Being Essential Agent at the Macro Level, Account for the Integration of ICC in EFL Education?

As formerly mentioned, we employed a document analysis within the exploratory phase of the research to answer the first research question. It was embodied in a syllabus evaluation rubric for document analysis. Notably, document analysis as our initial data gathering tool was very effective in providing a clear validation to our research gap and a straightforward answer to our first research question.

Upon conducting a structured data analysis and interpretation of the document analysis' findings, remarkable shortcomings in the OE CANEVAS design, implementation, and intercultural load were unveiled. To elaborate, the OE syllabus under evaluation fails to meet learners' 21st century needs to effectively and successfully communicate in an intercultural setting. The results indicated that there is a remarkable absence of clear interculturality-driven objectives and a limited inclusion of the cultural content.

To gain insights into policy intentions and provide a multi-perspective validation of the syllabus evaluation findings, an interview with the MESRS inspector was conducted. The inspector acknowledged that ICC is vital in EFL classes, and that EFL learners are required to effectively and appropriately engage in intercultural situations. However, the inspector admitted that the intercultural dimension is not sufficiently addressed because it is limited to students' background culture and religious affiliations.

Therefore, we can say that we provided an answer to the first research question by stating that policymakers at the macro level overlook the integration and the development of Intercultural Competence in curriculum and syllabus design despite the fact that they highly acknowledged its central importance. In other words, the intercultural dimension is disregarded

in designing EFL syllabi, particularly the OE syllabus, which is the case at the Department of English at LTU.

5.1.2. Conclusions for Research Question 2: To What Extent is the Intercultural Dimension Yielded in OE Classes at the Department of English at LTU?

By relating the second research question to the findings of teachers' classroom observations, it is revealed that the instructional practices of the observed teachers demonstrated a total absence of the intercultural dimension in all the sessions. Based on these findings, it is indicated that there was a sporadic inclusion of cultural and intercultural content. This reflects a connection between second-year OE syllabus at the Department of English at LTU and how it is enacted by teachers at the micro level. Thus, ICC is overlooked as a key component in EFL education at both levels. In other words, it is scaffolded by findings from the classroom observations of the three teachers that integrating ICC in OE classes is disregarded.

When responding to the questionnaire, the teachers accounted, however, for the importance of integrating the intercultural dimension in the OE syllabus and, subsequently, in their instructional practices. Based on the questionnaire's findings, the teachers held positive perceptions toward the integration of ICC in EFL education. To put it plainly, results from the classroom observations indicate that the intercultural dimension is hardly at all implemented in second-year OE classes at the Department of English at LTU, except for some limited individual efforts of teachers.

5.1.3. Conclusions for Research Questions 3: To What Extent Does the Integration of TS in OE Syllabus Develop EFL Learners' ICC?

Results from the quasi-experimental design provided valuable conclusions in relation to the third research question. In the course of the experiment, a pretest, progress tests, and a post-test were employed. Therefore, we reached the following essential results:

- The pretest results revealed that both the EG and the CG had comparable baseline level prior to implementing the teaching intervention. The performed t-test confirmed that there was no statistically significant difference between both groups' initial level of intercultural proficiency.
- Unlike the CG, the EG received the treatment. Within the intervention phase, four progress tests were employed at the end of the four instructional chunks. The obtained results from the t-tests indicated that the EG outperformed the CG across the four aspects of ICC.
- To measure the comprehensive change or improvement, the post-test was conducted. The findings of which revealed a significant development in the EG's performance with regard to their intercultural proficiency. On the contrary, the CG indicated no improvement in their intercultural proficiency level.

The progress that the EG demonstrated is attributed to the effectiveness of the treatment. Therefore, it can be stated that integrating TS materials in second-year OE syllabus at the Department of English at LTU is an effective approach to help students develop ICC. In other words, TS proved efficient in enabling EG participants to effectively and appropriately communicate in an intercultural setting. The results that were obtained from the quasi-experimental design are in line with teachers' perceptions towards the efficacy of TS in cultivating EFL students' ICC. Thus, we can say that the third research question is answered; TS is a very effective approach in developing second-year students ICC at the Department of English at LTU when systematically integrated in their OE syllabus.

5.1.4. Conclusions to Research Question 4: What Specific Aspects of ICC Can be Enhanced through the Integration of TS into the OE Syllabus?

In response to the fourth research question about the specific ICC aspects that can be developed through integrating TS in the OE syllabus at the Department of English at LTU, the

results obtained from the experiment revealed that participants from the EG demonstrated progress in the four main components of ICC. In particular, the EG outperformed the CG in developing ‘intercultural knowledge’, ‘intercultural skills’, ‘intercultural attitudes’, and ‘critical cultural awareness’. This progress is ascribed to the effectiveness of the treatment and to the systematic division of the chunks to align the development of the aforementioned aspects.

As far as ‘intercultural knowledge’ is concerned, students who received the treatment showed an understanding of how culture shapes identity and communication. This, in fact, entails developing knowledge of their local culture and of other cultures. Results from the quasi-experimental design showed that the EG participants were able to actively discover cultural elements and interpret cultural meanings in various media. Through exposure to TS, students of the EG showed a sense of curiosity and openness toward others. Besides, introducing TS to OE classes helped raise the EG’s critical cultural awareness. To be more precise, the EG participants are encouraged to critically evaluate cultural practices and reflect on values, beliefs, and assumptions.

5.2. Pedagogical Implications

The findings in the present study proved the efficacy of integrating TS into the OE syllabus in developing EFL learners’ ICC at the Department of English at LTU. Based on the obtained results as well as the reviewed literature, the following implications are presented in order to be addressed by syllabus designers and curriculum developers, teachers, and students.

5.2.1. Implications for Syllabus Designers and Curriculum Developers

The anticipated implication that this study can suggest for syllabus designers and curriculum developers is that FL learning should be oriented toward preparing learners for a academically and professionally intercultural world. In fact, educational programme designers are presented with a set of challenges, stemming from the current syllabi in use that fail to meet the need to form language learners who can communicate in diverse intercultural settings.

Thus, syllabus designers and curriculum developers are invited to integrate the intercultural dimension in language education programmes. As established in the body of literature, Leask (2009) emphasized that the integration of the intercultural dimension into EFL curriculum as well as the teaching and learning processes should warrant consideration.

Moreover, syllabus designers are invited to reflect on the potential of the OE module as an optimal space to cultivate EFL learners' ICC. Actually, OE classes offer flexible interactive context in which the intercultural dimension is embedded. In this vein, Byram (2004) posited that intercultural teaching and learning requires to be experiential as it is less achievable if constrained within knowledge-centred subjects. Therefore, syllabus designers are invited to go beyond featuring the factual information of the TC in content subjects like civilisation and literature, to enlarge the scope to OE syllabi that modelize authentic intercultural settings.

Our present research is inclusive of valuable implications for syllabus designers and curriculum developers regarding the integration of TS in second year OE syllabus at the Department of English at LTU to develop and enhance learners' ICC. As a dynamic educational approach, TS allows learners to engage in diverse intercultural contexts. When integrated into second year OE syllabus at the Department of English at LTU, it enables students to engage in authentic experiences where they discover, analyze, interpret, negotiate, and mediate meaning across cultures. By embedding TS into OE syllabi, designers provide a flexible framework that aligns with communicative and intercultural learning goals.

Most importantly, this study prompts the need for a syllabus design that involves both macro level strategists and micro-level practitioners. This partnership is called for in this study because it leads to more innovative and practically implementable syllabus. Teachers, therefore, should be treated as key partners in policymaking, in general, and in curriculum development and syllabus design, in particular. Surprisingly, the findings from the teachers'

questionnaire revealed that, unlike the interviewed supervisor, the surveyed teachers are totally aware of the importance of integrating TS to OE syllabus to develop students ICC.

In the Algerian educational context, some researchers, such as Bouakal (2017) at the secondary level, and Boualli (2025) and Haddaoui (2019) at the level of higher education, have called for syllabus designers to integrate the intercultural content into language syllabi. These studies stressed the growing need for an intercultural-based syllabus. In line with this, the present study extends the previous body of research by providing deeper insight into the role and the importance of integrating TS in second year OE syllabus at the Department of English at LTU by addressing the demands of the 21st century that require competent intercultural communicators.

Most importantly, our study sheds light on the pedagogical disconnections and absence of dialogue between the macro-level authorities (MESRS) and the micro-level practitioners (teachers). This disconnection has led to a widening implementation gap, where curriculum decisions are made in isolation from classroom realities and modern education requirements. These findings emphasize the urgent need for collaborative curriculum design. It is important to note that the findings are limited to the context under investigation.

5.2.2. Implications for Teachers

Based on our research findings, inclusive pedagogical implications for teachers have emerged. To begin with, this study provides clear and contextualized guidelines that support teachers at the Department of English at LTU to adopt an interculturally-infused syllabus. Our study does not only define ICC as an ultimate objective in OE classes, but it rather provides concrete strategies, and sample sources and materials to guide teachers at the Department of English at LTU.

As mentioned earlier in the first chapter, Byram (1997) asserted that teachers require clear guidelines and practical strategies to integrate ICC in their classrooms. Similar research

in the Algerian context (e.g., Bouakal, 2017; Boualli, 2025; Haddaoui, 2019; Mizab, 2020) revealed that without specific guidance, teachers struggle to translate intercultural goals into pedagogical actions. Similarly, this study urges second year OE teachers at the Department of English at LTU to adopt a syllabus that integrate the intercultural dimension so that students' ICC is fostered.

Another significant implication that this study highlights is the efficacy of TS as an interactive pedagogical approach in cultivating EFL learners' ICC, particularly within second year OE classes at the Department of English at LTU. As a matter of fact, TS enables teachers to engage their students with multiple media platforms and, thus, develop their critical thinking, empathy, and intercultural reflection (Jenkins, 2006). The existing literature focuses either on traditional approaches to enhance learners' ICC like short stories (Rezaei & Naghibian, 2018), or on modern e-learning approaches such as technology-based instruction (Omeddour, 2023). By implementing TS, our study suggests for teachers a multi-layered pedagogy that merges both approaches. Doing so, TS proves efficient in aligning with second year students' individual differences and learning needs at the Department of English at LTU.

In line with Sercu (2005) and Porto and Byram' (2015) implications, teacher training programmes should be considered to provide teachers with pedagogical and digital literacies. These programmes should focus on equipping OE teachers at the Department of English at LTU with a training that enables them to effectively integrate the intercultural content with TS-based methods for the ultimate goal of developing learners who are able to appropriately engage in diverse intercultural settings. By aligning training programmes with teachers' positive perceptions toward incorporating TS in OE classes to enhance students' ICC, our suggested dynamic TS approach becomes more feasible and promising. Our choice of TS provides and visualise how theories in the field of ICC are turned into practice.

5.2.3. Implications for Learners

In line with this study's findings, several pedagogical implications for second year students at the Department of English at LTU are suggested. In this particular context, learners are encouraged to be exposed to intercultural learning opportunities so that they can go beyond the limitations of linguistic competence to enhance their ICC. In this vein, Byram (1997) posited that EFL learners need to develop not only knowledge about other cultures, but they are also required to cultivate intercultural skills, intercultural attitudes, and critical cultural awareness.

In addition to that, learners in the context of this study should be encouraged to enhance their intercultural proficiency through the use of TS. The findings of this study emphasize the effectiveness of TS as dynamic pedagogical approach that immerses learners in interculturally rich environments (Jenkins, 2006; Liu & Gallois, 2014). In line with Porto and Byram (2015), our findings encourage learners to approach language learning from an intercultural lens. Accordingly, they need to direct the goal of their language learning to effectively communicate across cultural boundaries, rather than imitate native speakers.

5.3. Recommendations

Based on our study findings in relation to integrating TS in second year OE syllabus to develop EFL students' ICC at the Department of English at LTU, some actionable recommendations are suggested. These recommendations intend to bridge the gap between the obtained results and practical applications.

- **Policymakers should account for the 21 century competencies and global citizenship**

Since policymakers have a direct influence on the development of language programmes, they are highly recommended to shape the vision of EFL educational system in respect to intercultural education. Hence, educational policies should be revisited to reinforce

the integration of ICC and set the intercultural objective at the heart of curriculum development. This is mainly to ensure that language learning is aligned with the 21st century educational requirements to develop learners who can appropriately and effectively communicate in diverse cultural setting.

With the growing needs to develop global citizenship, policymakers are highly required to embrace strategies for curriculum internationalization. Grounded in ICC models (Byram, 1997; Deardorff's 2006), educational policies should support the integration of intercultural dimension into EFL programmes at both of the macro (policymaking) and the micro (classrooms) levels. As such, policymakers are invited to provide clear frameworks that bridge language learning with intercultural proficiency.

To put these policies into practice, it is recommended that policymakers initiate training programmes for teachers. These programmes should be established around intercultural teaching, experiential learning, and TS as an innovative approach that fosters global engagement (Jenkins, 2006). Additionally, initiating mutual exchange projects such as virtual collaborations and mobility programmes across educational systems are tremendously encouraged. In a nutshell, national policies should adopt internationalization and interculturality as their ultimate goal in EFL education.

➤ **ICC should be integrated in EFL education in general and in OE syllabi in particular**

Rather than a marginal add-on, ICC is undoubtedly a core component that should be integrated into EFL education. In today's globalized world that necessitates acquiring the ability to effectively and appropriately communicate with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds, language learning should not be exclusively constrained to focus on linguistic proficiency. This reorientation of focus is particularly needed in the context of OE syllabus. As mentioned earlier, OE classes provide an authentic interactive experience for learners to

meaningfully communicate in various situations. In other terms, the OE session is the best platform wherein a variety of intercultural-based topics and activities can be introduced.

Despite the fact that the intercultural objective is highlighted in EFL BA or undergraduate curriculum at the Department of English at LTU, the intercultural dimension is absent in both second year OE syllabus and in teachers' practices as well. When implemented, teachers at the Department of English at LTU have no guidance to integrate ICC in their OE classes. Even the informal discussions that the research attended disregard the integration of the intercultural dimension. Therefore, it is highly recommended that an intercultural-based syllabus is designed to develop EFL learners' ICC.

➤ **TS should be integrated into OE syllabus as a transformative approach that cultivates learners' ICC**

TS should be formally embedded into OE syllabus at the Department of English at LTU as a promising pedagogical tool that fosters learners' ICC. The participatory and collaborative nature of TS is aligned with the essence of ICC. In other words, adopting a TS approach to language learning and teaching is compatible with the objective of intercultural learning. By integrating TS in EFL classrooms, students at the Department of English at LTU can be engaged in diverse cultural narratives. This approach does not only harmonize with the multimedia preferences of today's digital-native learners, but it also leverages the interconnected nature of modern media consumption habits. By integrating TS techniques in EFL instruction, educators can engage students in immersive learning experiences that extend beyond traditional classroom models which rely on teacher-centeredness and passive learning.

➤ **Teachers should adapt their teaching to cultivate learners' ICC**

In the context of this study, teachers are invited to adapt their teaching practices to incorporate TS as an innovative pedagogical approach to cultivate FL learners ICC. It is important to note that teachers of OE at the Department of English at LTU hold positive

perceptions toward intercultural learning through TS. However, their teaching practices, that were observed during the observation phase of the study, demonstrated the absence of the intracultural dimension. As such, it is highly recommended that teacher should purposefully integrate the intercultural dimension into their OE classes, in particular, and into their EFL classes, in general. Therefore, teachers should seek out training programs, workshops, online courses, conferences, or even informal discussions to enhance their intercultural teaching.

➤ **Students should be encouraged to widen their perspectives and develop appropriate attitudes**

Based on the findings of the present study, it is recommended that students should be encouraged to develop appropriate attitudes. The positive shift in the EG's attitudes, that was observed through the experiment as well as the attitude questionnaire, revealed the efficacy of the implemented approach. Unlike the EG, the CG, where participants did not receive the treatment, demonstrated no shift in their attitudes toward intercultural learning. Therefore, holding positive attitude allows them to dispel their stereotypical beliefs and suspend misjudgement. This implies that attitudes of openness, tolerance, and curiosity, that are considered by Byram (1997) as pillars in ICC development, are highly recommended for EFL students.

To trace and assess their own progress regarding ICC development, it is recommended that students maintain a reflective Portfolio. Keeping a Portfolio that tracks students' ongoing progress offers them the opportunity to develop their intercultural proficiency and self-evaluate their improvements. In alignment with this, portfolios have been regarded as a continuous record of students' ICC development, and a holistic view of their language learning (O'Malley and Pierce, 1997, as cited in Dimitriado et al., 2020). Therefore, keeping portfolios for intercultural learning is highly recommended for EFL learners since they tremendously motivate them to reflect on their own intercultural experience. It is worth mentioning that this

recommendation is only applicable if an intercultural programme is implemented at both the macro and micro levels.

5.4. Recommendation for Future Research

The present research has identified several areas that warrant further future investigation. They are as follows :

- The scope of this research is restricted to the population of second year students at the Department of English at LTU. Besides, the evaluated document is concerned solely with second year OE syllabus at the same institution. Further empirical studies can be conducted to encompass other levels, other subjects and other institutions.
- A quasi-experimental design was employed in this research as a quantitative data gathering tool. As such, it is recommended that further research employ a true experimental design to strengthen the generalizability of findings.
- Further research is highly recommended to examine the impact of TS on other variables such as autonomous learning and leadership skills, since they are also at the heart of ICC competence development.
- Extended research is further needed to investigate the efficacy of virtual exchange programmes or student mobility on the development of their ICC.
- Researchers may explore the potential of integrating AI tools on enhancing learners' ICC.

5.5. Study Limitations and Delimitations

In this study, limitations and delimitations are cogently addressed to prevent undermining the validity of the research. The study is limited in scope by the size of its sample which is restricted to a representative group of students. Despite the fact that the number of participants is low and the selected groups were predefined by the administration, the data collection is in-depth. Regarding teachers' observation, it was challenging to manage time for

observing the third teacher due to the overlapping teaching schedule. As far as the interview with the inspector is concerned, ten questions out of the eleven designed ones were answered because the call with the inspector ended and there was no way to call back.

In narrowing down the scope of the research, three main boundaries that delimited this study were identified. In point of fact, this study is delimited to second-year OE syllabus; that is to say, findings are relevant in relation to the document under study. Additionally, our study was conducted with EFL university students. Thus, the findings excluded learners at other educational levels. Furthermore, the geographical scope of the research was bounded to Algeria and, more specifically, to student at LTU. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to other national contexts. In short, the aforementioned limitations and delimitations are remarkably essential for the manageability of the study.

Conclusion

The current study investigated the effectiveness of TS in developing EFL learners' ICC. In light of the obtained results, it has been confirmed that integrating TS into second-year OE syllabus develops students' ICC at the Department of English at LTU. Therefore, pedagogical implications are highlighted and some recommendations are provided. Correspondingly, policymakers and syllabus designers at the macro level as well as stakeholders at the micro level are invited to assume their respective roles and responsibilities to effectively promote intercultural teaching and learning.

General Conclusion

The current research has thoroughly investigated the effectiveness of Transmedia Storytelling in developing EFL learners' Intercultural Communicative Competence. Adopting an integrative approach, the study examined the central importance of incorporating the intercultural dimension through TS in developing learners' intercultural proficiency. It is important to reiterate that this critical inquiry has been conducted in a particular context, which is that of second-year Oral Expression syllabus at the Department of English at LTU. The research-driven motivation stemmed from the noticeable critical deficiency in the intercultural content within EFL programmes in use with reference to the Algerian context. The assumed status quo of second-year OE syllabus and its enactment in classrooms was well positioned in the literature review and, most importantly, it was validated within our exploratory study.

Building on this gap, the study aimed at exploring the extent to which the intercultural dimension is emphasized at both the macro level (policymakers) and the micro level (stakeholders). Stemming from the belief that developing ICC is a necessary requirement for learners to efficiently and appropriately engage in an intercultural setting, the study introduced TS as an innovative approach that can enhance EFL learners' ICC. This, in fact, called for a shift towards an interculturally-infused syllabus.

To achieve the stated research aims, it was necessary to position our study within the existing body of literature and, hence, establish well-founded arguments for our research endeavour in the area of intercultural education. The examined literature has revealed that the reorientation of focus to inter-culturalization in the field of EFL education is motivated by globalisation and digital interconnectedness. Therefore, the increasing need to teach culture through language has given considerable attention in EFL education since the second half of the twentieth century. The researcher, hence, argued for the need to interculturalize EFL

education, to the close relationship between language and culture, and to the inadequacies of previous approaches in EFL education.

In contrast to the literature that addresses Intercultural Communicative Competence, which is the Dependent Variable in this research, Transmedia Storytelling, which is the Independent Variable of the research, is marked by no evident contradiction. While the body of literature remains modest, its validity in EFL education is widely supported. The innovation in the present study has been seen in the intersection of TS and ICC. Grounded in the reviewed literature, our strong and sound argument is evident in the particularity of TS in bridging the gap between the necessity of gaining knowledge from traditional approaches and the innovation and richness of modernized approaches. The middle ground where TS is positioned in makes it a fitting approach for addressing the 21st century demands of developing interculturally competent communicators.

Reflecting the required nature of the study, a mixed-methods approach was applied. Empirically, the researcher initiated the study with an evaluation of second-year OE syllabus at the Department of English at LTU. To explore its enactment in the classrooms within the same context, a semester-long observation of teachers' practices was conducted. This was, then, followed by an interview with an inspector from the MESRS. Within this exploratory phase of the research, the obtained results revealed a clear absence of the intercultural dimension at both the macro and micro levels. This entails that the OE syllabus in use, which is used with second-year students at the Department of English at LTU is non-intercultural in nature.

The explanatory phase of the research was marked by administering the questionnaires and conducting the experiment. During the pre-experimental phase, the collected data by means of students' entrance questionnaire helped the researcher to establish a baseline as both of the EG and the CG exhibit similar preintervention characteristics. To understand teachers' perceptions and engage them in the process of the research, a questionnaire was administered

to ten teachers who have actually experienced the teaching of OE. The questionnaire's results demonstrated that despite the fact that teachers' instructional practices are devoid of intercultural content, their responses showed favourable perceptions regarding the integration of TS in second-year OE syllabus at the Department of English at LTU to foster students' ICC.

Within the experimental phase, the EG and the CG have undergone a pretest, progress tests, and a post-test so as to examine and evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention and test the hypotheses. To compare the means of both groups at all test levels, SPSS ver.25 was used to generate both descriptive data including statistics of the mean, standard deviation, frequency, and inferential statistics that entail paired and independent samples t-test. The results of the t-test revealed a significant improvement in second-year students' ICC in the EG at the Department of English at LTU. Student's progress in intercultural proficiency is, hence, attributed to the implementation of TS. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis, positing that "if Transmedia Storytelling is integrated in second-year OE syllabus at LTU, Students' Intercultural Communicative Competence will significantly develop", is confirmed. This indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the EG and the CG in the development of their ICC in the context of our study is confirmed.

Within the post-experimental phase, the attitudinal questionnaire was administered. The obtained results from students' attitudinal questionnaire highlighted the difference between the EG and the CG. In simpler terms, the EG demonstrated favourable attitudes across all the intercultural aspects, including knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviour. By contrast, The CG showed less support for intercultural learning. These differences were statistically supported to be attributed to the implementation of the intervention.

Based on the obtained findings of the study, it can be said that the research aims have been successfully achieved. Aiming to examine the intercultural load of the OE syllabus at the Department of English at LTU and its enactment in the OE classes, the study indicates that the

intercultural dimension is neither integrated within the document under study, or in practice. Findings of the teachers' questionnaires and the interview with the MESRS inspector provide reliable evidence that the aim of the study to explore policymakers and stakeholders' stance regarding the importance of integrating the intercultural dimension in EFL education is met. Through conducting an experiment, the research's aim, that is directed toward investigating the effectiveness of TS in developing EFL learners' ICC at the Department of English at LTU, is successfully attained.

Significantly, the research questions that guided the course of the study are clearly answered (section (5.1)). In fact, the four research questions are fully addressed in a sequential manner. In light of the obtained results and the discussion of the research questions, the research hypotheses are addressed. Based on the results of the document analysis, teachers' classroom observations, and the MESRS interview, the hypothesis of the exploratory research stating that: "incorporating the intercultural dimension may be required in academic plannings of EFL curricula and syllabi in the Algerian higher education" is confirmed. Based on the findings of the students' entrance questionnaire, the quasi-experiment, and the students' attitudinal questionnaire, the hypothesis of the experimental research that states that "If Transmedia Storytelling is integrated in second-year OE syllabus at LTU, Students' Intercultural Communicative Competence will significantly develop" is likely confirmed. Based on the aforementioned findings, several implications and research recommendations are identified.

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Appendices

Appendix (A) : Second-Year Oral Expression *Canevas* (Contents of the Syllabus)

L2 Oral Comprehension and Expression

Intitulé de la Licence: Langue Anglaise

Semestre : 3 et 4

Objectifs de l'enseignement

The student will be able to understand and speak longer conversations in English. He will develop an ability to speak in different situations and contexts as fluently and naturally as possible.

Connaissances préalables recommandées

Understanding and speaking short conversations in English is essential.

Contenu de la matière:

Interactive skills to enhance comprehension

*Communication skills (verbal and non-verbal expression)

*Paraphrasing and elaboration skills

*How to improve your vocabulary (vocabulary beyond that of the subject matter)

*Tips to speak English fluently (fluency, intelligibility, and acceptability)

*How to make a presentation/ a speech

Oratory/ Public Speaking

How to select the speech topic, creating a speech outline, apply gestures, staging and vocal variety, analyzing the audience, the scene and determine its objectives.

Types of Oratory Speaking

Informative oratory

Persuasive oratory

Descriptive oratory

Adapting Oratory to other occasions and formats

Wedding speech

Graduation speech

Welcome speech

Presenting or receiving an award, etc...

***Keys to better listening comprehension**

What is critical Listening?

Mindset, Listen, read, speak (shadowing), Diversity

What makes native speakers hard to understand

What's special about the structure of English Language

Common English pronunciation traps

*British pronunciation Vs American pronunciation

*Phrasal verbs

*English idioms

Mode d'évaluation:

Continu et Examen

Références (Livres et photocopiés, sites internet, etc):

1- Sherry Preiss NorthStar Listening and Speaking, Advanced Second Edition (2003)

2- David Christiansen and Joan Ashkenas, The Complete Listening- Speaking Course:
Student Centered, Teacher Guided (2001)

3- Miles Craven, Cambridge English Skills Real Listening and Speaking 1 with answers and
Audio CD (2008)

Appendix (B) : Syllabus Evaluation Rating Checklist

Ratings:

1	2	3	4	5	6
Does not meet the criterion	Poorly meets the criterion	Partially meets the criterion	Adequately meets the criterion	Almost meets all the criteria	Fully meets the criterion

N	Criteria	Aspects	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Logical Sequence and Organization of Content	Content is logically sequenced throughout the course duration	1	2	3	4	5	6
		Syllabus is organized by units with specific topics that are distributed over weeks	1	2	3	4	5	6
		Content is appropriate in scope for instructional hours	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	Content Relevance of Objectives	Content aligns with the syllabus objectives and are planned to achieve the course objectives	1	2	3	4	5	6
		A combination of both language-based learning and skills-based learning	1	2	3	4	5	6
		Course content supports the development of intercultural communication skills	1	2	3	4	5	6
		Activities are interculturally-oriented	1	2	3	4	5	6
		Activities include experiential learning and real-life contexts	1	2	3	4	5	6
		Instructional practices support students' intercultural needs and goals	1	2	3	4	5	6
		A variety of intercultural daily events are integrated	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	Content Type and Focus	Amalgam of language-based, skills-based, and learning-based content	1	2	3	4	5	6
		Content prepares learners for daily life, traditions, and living conditions	1	2	3	4	5	6
		Content targets social conventions, such as meeting etiquette	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity	Content addresses values, beliefs, and attitudes of the target culture	1	2	3	4	5	6
		Content supports a deep understanding of sensitivity to otherness	1	2	3	4	5	6
		Content focuses on verbal communication skills	1	2	3	4	5	6
		Content equally emphasizes non-verbal communication, such as body language, and facial expressions	1	2	3	4	5	6
5	Cultural Knowledge - History, Geography, Literature,	The course introduces students to historical, geographical, literary, and artistic aspects of the target culture	1	2	3	4	5	6
		The course material includes an exposure to art, music, and cultural expressions	1	2	3	4	5	6

	Art, and Music								
6	Cultural Integration	Integrates both home culture and foreign culture to cultivate intercultural understanding	1	2	3	4	5	6	
		A clear focus on integrating the intercultural dimension	1	2	3	4	5	6	
7	Compatibility with Learners' Needs and Expectations	Content matches learners' level	1	2	3	4	5	6	
		Syllabus builds on learners' schematic knowledge to attain new learning objectives	1	2	3	4	5	6	
		Clarifying learners' prior knowledge and identifying the course expected outcomes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
8	Instructor's Expectations and Alignment	Content aligns with the instructor's expectations and objectives for the course	1	2	3	4	5	6	
		Content supports the instructor in conveying complex intercultural topics	1	2	3	4	5	6	
9	Objectives	Objectives are interculturally-oriented and support ICC	1	2	3	4	5	6	
		Objectives reflect on learners' intercultural behaviours	1	2	3	4	5	6	
		Objectives target intercultural interactions and global communication	1	2	3	4	5	6	
		Objectives align both local and global perspectives	1	2	3	4	5	6	
		Objectives encourage recognition of self and one's culture through others' perspectives	1	2	3	4	5	6	
10	Teaching Methods	The syllabus consists of diverse teaching methods for assessing students' progress	1	2	3	4	5	6	
		Methods facilitate engagement with cultural differences	1	2	3	4	5	6	
		Methods support dialogue, reflection, and alternative paradigms of learning	1	2	3	4	5	6	
		Use of technology and social media for global dialogue and exposure to multiple viewpoints	1	2	3	4	5	6	
11	Evaluation Mode	Evaluation materials are authentic, interculturally-driven, and unbiased.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
		Evaluation procedures assess students' intercultural competences	1	2	3	4	5	6	
		Evaluation outcomes describe students' competencies and highlight program planning	1	2	3	4	5	6	
		Multiple forms of learning evidence are used.	1	2	3	4	5	6	

Appendix (C) : Classroom Observation Checklist in Oral Expression Subject

Module: Oral Expression

Context: Tebessa University /English Department

Teacher:

Time Allocated:

Class: 2-year LMD English students

Observer: Fares Souhaila

Observation Focus: Interactions patterns, content dealing with cultural and intercultural dimensions, story-based teaching, learning styles, materials, and communicative teaching.

Dimensions	Descriptors	Presence and Rating Per Session				
		Never	Sometimes	Frequently	Frequently +	Always
Interaction Patterns	Plenary	1	2	3	4	5
	Individual	1	2	3	4	5
	Pair	1	2	3	4	5
	Group	1	2	3	4	5
Content Dealing with	Cultural Diversity/ Local and Target Culture	1	2	3	4	5
	Cultural/ Intercultural Issues	1	2	3	4	5
	Intercultural Barriers	1	2	3	4	5
	Authentic Intercultural Situations	1	2	3	4	5
Story-based Teaching	Narratives	1	2	3	4	5
	Storytelling	1	2	3	4	5
	Transmedia Stories	1	2	3	4	5
Meeting different learning strategies and styles	Visual	1	2	3	4	5
	Auditory	1	2	3	4	5
	Read/Write	1	2	3	4	5
	Kinaesthetic	1	2	3	4	5
Materials	The use of Technology	1	2	3	4	5
	Narrative texts	1	2	3	4	5
	Multi-media	1	2	3	4	5
	Cultural Materials	1	2	3	4	5
	Intercultural Materials	1	2	3	4	5
Communicative Teaching	Using Real-World Situations	1	2	3	4	5
	Contextualising Language	1	2	3	4	5
	Oral Communication	1	2	3	4	5
	Integration of Language Skills	1	2	3	4	5

	Students' Engagement	1	2	3	4	5
	Meaningful Inputs and Outputs	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix (D) : Interview with General Inspectors at the MESRS

Q1. Name

Q2. Age

Q3. Qualification

Q4. Experience (Working as a Pedagogy Inspector)

Q5. What are your responsibilities as a general inspector?

Q6. What criteria do you consider when assessing language curricular?

Q7. To what extent does the current EFL curriculum address Intercultural Communicative Competence?

Q8. How well does the teaching materials represent cultural perspectives?

Q9. Do current curricular balance between local and target culture?

Q10. What guidance is provided to teachers for integrating the intercultural dimension into the EFL classroom?

Q11. Do you take into consideration the recommendations made in scientific research when it comes to improving the EFL curriculum?

Appendix (E) : The Pretest

The Pretest

Part One : Students are exposed to a **scenario**-based interactive video wherein a couple splits the bill after taking lunch at the restaurant. The assessor, then, asks students to work in pairs (**role play**). One student explains how splitting the bill is practical within the target culture context providing appropriate arguments. The partner is required to compare and express surprise about this cultural aspect by listing counter arguments.

Part Two : The Interview

- Can you identify who you are, please (introduce yourself)?
- Do you like to know more about others' cultures?
- When dealing with people who are different from you, do you tolerate their cultural practices? Would you share those practices with them?
- To what extent do you empathize with others?
- Do you use non-verbal communication? What does it express?
- Do you easily understand the non-verbal communication of people from a different culture?
- Do you show remarkable interest in others' talks?
- Do you think about others from a different perspective?

Appendix (F) : Analytical Rating Scale

Pretest/Post-test — Analytical Rating Scale

Student's Name: Date:

Criteria of Intercultural Competence	1 (Low)	3 (Medium)	5 (High)
Openness and Acknowledgement	Interacts with unease and skepticism in different intercultural setting.	Holds selective openness toward other cultures (depending on how much values conflict.)	Shows consistent openness toward unfamiliar values and perspectives, and acknowledges cultural differences.
Adaptability	Struggles to adapt behaviour in diverse intercultural setting.	Occasionally adapts behaviour in diverse intercultural setting.	Consistently adapts behaviour in diverse intercultural setting.
Critical Reflection	Shows little or no reflection on cultural assumptions.	Shows awareness of cultural assumptions with limited depth.	Engages in deep critical reflection through examining biases and identifying how culture influences perception.
Discovering	Shows limited skills to acquire new cultural knowledge.	Shows medium skills to acquire new cultural knowledge.	Shows high skills to acquire new cultural knowledge.
Perspectives	Demonstrates difficulties in understanding perspectives that are different from their own culture, and react with discomfort toward cultural differences.	Tries to understand others' perspectives and react accordingly, but interpretations may still be influenced by one's worldview.	Understands different cultural perspectives, and interacts effectively with others in different intercultural setting.
Relating	Low ability to see connections between own and other cultures.	Basic skills to compare one's own culture and others. However, their recognizable similarities and differences are sometimes biased.	Skilfully connect between cultures across context.
Evaluation Skills	Shows little awareness of cultural differences, often interpreting	Begins to recognize cultural differences with	Shows the ability to critically evaluate the perspectives, practices,

	them with stereotypical reference.	superficial interpretation.	and events of one's own and other cultures.
Ethical Stance	Shows little to no sensitivity to cultural differences, and makes judgments based on one's own perspectives.	Acknowledges existing differences in ethical perspectives, and sees one's own as superior.	Shows ethical openness and respect within different cultural context.
Explanation	Has difficulties to clearly explain cultural concepts or behaviours.	Provides general explanations of cultural values with limited accuracy.	Interacts with others using appropriate explanations of complex cultural topics.
Interpreting	Misinterprets cultural meaning of the TC.	Interprets some cultural meaning with reliance on surface knowledge.	Interprets meaning correctly with an awareness of underlying values and cultural references.
Mediating	Fails to engage in mediation, and prioritizes one's own worldview.	Makes limited efforts to mediate between cultures.	Effectively mediates between different worldviews.
Worldview	Holds a narrowed view that is shaped by one's own cultural norms.	Identifying cultural differences, but may evaluate them from one's own worldview.	Appreciates the existence of different worldviews, and skilfully interprets perspectives within their own cultural contexts.
Respect	Shows little respect for cultural differences and displays judgment and superiority.	Shows respect most of the time, but still considers their own culture as a reference.	Consistently displays deep respect for diverse cultures, and values differences.
Curiosity	Shows little to no interest in other cultures, accepts stereotypes, and avoids engagement.	Shows some interest in culturally guided topics, and questions about cultural differences.	Shows a genuine interest in learning about other cultures, and demonstrates a great willingness to ask questions, and seeks deep understanding.

Appendix (G) : Holistic Rating Scale

Pretest/Post-test — Holistic Rating Scale

Student's Name: Date:

Criteria of Intercultural Competence	1 (Low)	3 (Medium)	5 (High)
Intercultural Knowledge	Misinterprets cultural meaning of own cultural norms and of others.	Shows general understanding of cultural meaning with reliance on surface knowledge.	Shows a deep understanding of the processes of socializations and holds a knowledge about the causes of misunderstanding.
Intercultural Skills	Struggles to interact within diverse intercultural setting, and often misunderstands norms.	Can interact with individuals from different cultures, but still needs guidance and cultural reference.	Appropriately and effectively interacts with people from different cultural settings, and collaborates respectfully across cultures.
Intercultural Attitudes	Interacts with unease and skepticism in different intercultural setting. May show personal biases, stereotypes, and cultural superiority.	Tries to understand others' worldview and react accordingly, but interpretations may still be influenced by one's worldview, and may retain biases and discomfort.	Shows openness, acknowledgement, curiosity, and respect toward other cultures; demonstrates a great willingness to ask questions, and seeks deep understanding.
Cultural Awareness	Shows little awareness of cultural differences, often interpreting them with stereotypical reference.	Begins to recognize cultural differences with superficial interpretation.	Shows the ability to critically evaluate the perspectives, practices, and events of one's own and other cultures.

Appendix (H) : Progress Tests

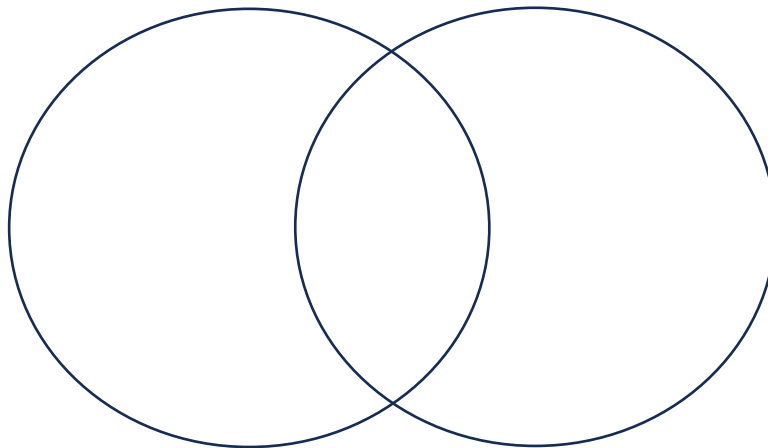
Progress Test One (Intercultural Knowledge)

1 Watch the excerpts from the movie *The Hidden Fortress*. Then, do the following tasks:

- a. Identify verbal and non-verbal cues that are related to the Japanese culture.
- b. Analyse how the characters' behaviours reflect their cultural backgrounds.
- c. How do they relate to your knowledge about intercultural understanding?

2 In a Venn Diagram, compare your own culture with a paired one of your choice.

Make use the following cultural elements to guide your comparison: Verbal and non-verbal communication, beliefs, customs and traditions, cultural symbols, education, and work ethics,...



Progress Test Two (Intercultural Skills)

You are in a multicultural group project. Someone makes a culturally biased statement. How do you respond?

- a. People from Arab countries are always late.**
- b. Your English is good for someone from Algeria.**
- c. Your ideas are too traditional.**
- d. You are not used to work with technology, right.**
- e. You are too passive to lead....**

Progress Test Three (Intercultural Attitudes)

Read the provided intercultural situations carefully. Then, choose the response that you think reflects the highest level of respect and intercultural understanding toward otherness.

1

Multiple Choice Questions: Choose the best answer

- A. You are working with an international team. One of the team members from Japan prefers to keep quiet during discussions. How do you respond?**
 - a. Ask him/her why s/he is quiet.
 - b. Ignore him/her and give no attention.
 - c. Create space for him/her to take part in the discussion in his/her style.
 - d. Say publicly that everyone has to participate in the group discussion.
- B. You are invited to a traditional meal in a friend's home who is from a different culture. The dish that was offered is unfamiliar to. What is the most respectful response to this intercultural situation?**
 - a. Refuse to eat and ask for something different.
 - b. Accept the food and try it.

- c. Ask publicly what the food is made of.
- d. Pretend to eat.

C. A friend wears cultural custom that is unfamiliar in your culture. A respectful response to this situation would be:

- a. Ask if s/he has a special occasion to wear this.
- b. Make fun of it.
- c. Avoid being with him/her not to be seen by others.
- d. Take a picture of him/her without asking for permission.

D. During a cultural exchange, someone voices a different belief that contrasts yours. How would you react?

- a. Tell him/her that s/he is wrong.
- b. Ask him/her to explain more about his/her beliefs.
- c. Ignore what s/he said.
- d. Change the topic.

E. You notice that someone mispronounces your name. what is your reaction?

- a. Get angry and correct it.
- b. Let it go.
- c. Politely correct them and explain how to say it.
- d. Make fun of their pronunciation.

2

Short Answer: Write a short response to each scenario-based situation

- a. A friend from another country refuses to eat beef for religious reasons and cannot join a lunch invitation.

.....
.....

b. You offend someone by saying something that has a negative meaning in their culture.

.....
.....

c. How would you mediate in a situation where there is a disagreement between individuals from different cultural backgrounds.

.....
.....

Progress Test Four (Critical Cultural Awareness)

Students were asked to choose a cultural document (TS materials are encouraged) and evaluate it based on the intercultural components.

Sample of Students' Answers

One of the cultural values present in the novel is the importance of survival. In the dystopian world of the Hunger Games, the people living in the districts are forced to fight to the death in an annual televised event. The main character, Katniss Everdeen, embodies the value of survival as she fights to stay alive and protect her loved ones. This value is also reflected in the society of the Capitol, where the wealthy citizens live in excess and decadence, but also have a ruthless approach to survival.

Another cultural value in the novel is the importance of family and community. Katniss comes from District 12, a poor and marginalized district where people rely on each other for support and survival. Katniss is motivated by her love for her family and her desire to protect her community. This value is also present in the relationship between Katniss and her fellow tribute Peeta Mellark, as they rely on each other and form a bond that helps them survive.

In terms of verbal and non-verbal communication, the Hunger Games themselves are a prime example of non-verbal communication. The tributes must use their physical abilities and strategy to communicate with each other and the audience, as they are constantly being watched by cameras. The use of non-verbal cues and body language is also important in the political maneuvering and power struggles of the Capitol.

As for whether these cultural values are tolerated by Arabic culture, it's important to note that cultural values vary greatly across different regions and societies within the Arabic world. However, the themes of survival, family, and community are generally universal and can be appreciated by people from different cultures. The violent nature of the Hunger Games may be more controversial, but it is also important to recognize that violence is present in many cultures and can be portrayed in media in a responsible and meaningful way. Ultimately, whether a particular cultural value or theme is tolerated by a specific society depends on a range of factors and cannot be generalised.

Appendix (I) : The Post-test

The Post-test

Part One : In the first part, students were asked to perform a play about intercultural exchange event (The Global Village Café). The misunderstandings escalate: Intercultural knowledge, skills, attitudes, and students' critical cultural awareness.

Part Two : The Interview Accredited IC Tool- the Intercultural Readiness Check IRC

- Can you identify who you are?
- How actively are you interested in other people and their cultural background?
- How effectively do you adjust your communication style to meet the needs of people in culturally diverse setting?
- How much do you invest in building culturally diverse network?
- How effectively do you use cultural diversity as a source of learning and innovation?

Appendix (J) : Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teacher,

We kindly invite you to take part in this questionnaire, which investigates teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of TS in developing EFL learners' Intercultural Communicative Competence. Your responses to this questionnaire are highly valuable and will contribute to our research.

Thank you in advance for taking time to participate in this study

Please, tick the right box or write in the provided spaces

I. Section One : General Information

1. Please, specify your age

2. Please, specify your nationality.....

3. Degree held:

Master

Magister

PHD

4. How long have you been teaching?

1 to 5 years

6 to 10 years

11 to 15 years

More than 15 years

5. Beside Oral Expression, what is (are) the modules that you usually teach?

.....

II. Section Two: Culture and Intercultural Teaching

6. What do think about the integration of culture in EFL teaching?

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Important
- Moderately important
- Slightly important
- Not important

7. How often do you focus on cultural similarities and differences in Oral Expression sessions?

- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

8. Which of the following Intercultural Communicative Competence do you believe is the key for successful intercultural communication?

- Intercultural knowledge
- Intercultural skills
- Intercultural attitude
- Intercultural awareness
- All of them

9. How do you describe your students' intercultural proficiency?

- Very good
- Good

- Very slow
- Slow
- I don't know

10. Do you think students with good intercultural proficiency level are successful language communicators?

- Yes
- No

11. Where would you locate the oral expression syllabus at the Department of English at Larbi Tebessi University?

- Not culturally driven
- Minimally culturally driven
- Moderately culturally driven
- Highly culturally driven
- Entirely culturally driven

III. Section Three: The Use of TS

12. How familiar are you with the concept of TS?

- Very familiar
- Somewhat familiar
- Not familiar

13. If familiar, which transmedia tools or platforms have you used in your teaching? (select all that apply)

- Novels
- Films
- Comics
- Podcasts

- Social media
- Others, specify.....

14. How often do you integrate storytelling (in any format) into your teaching practices?

- Regularly
- Occasionally
- Rarely
- Never

IV. Section Four : Perceptions of TS and ICC Development

15. To what extent do you think TS can help students understand different cultural perspectives?

- Very effective
- Moderately effective
- Slightly effective
- Not effective

16. Which aspects of ICC do you think TS can develop the most? (Select all that apply):

- Awareness of cultural diversity
- Empathy and perspective-taking
- Knowledge of cultural norms and practices
- Effective intercultural communication strategies
- Other (please specify):

17. Do you think TS can motivate learners to engage more with intercultural topics?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree

- Strongly disagree

18. How do you perceive the challenges of using TS in an EFL classroom?

- Lack of resources
- Time constraints
- Difficulty in aligning with curriculum goals
- Limited digital literacy among learners
- Other (please specify):

V. Section Five: Teachers' Perspectives on TS and ICC

19. In your opinion, what are the main advantages of using TS to teach ICC in EFL learners?

.....
.....
.....

20. What challenges have you faced when using TS in your teaching?

.....
.....
.....

21. Can you share a specific example (if any) where storytelling or transmedia tools enhanced your students' intercultural awareness or communication skills?

.....
.....

22. What additional support or resources would you need to implement TS more effectively in your teaching?

.....

.....

Appendix (K) : Students' Entrance Questionnaire

Dear student,

My name is Ms. Souhaila FARES, a PHD candidate in the Didactics of English as a Foreign Language and Culture. This questionnaire is conducted to establish a baseline equivalence and measure initial conditions before undertaking the experiment that entails integrating Transmedia Storytelling in the oral expression syllabus to develop learners' Intercultural Communicative Competence. In this respect, you are kindly requested to answer the following questions. Your responses will be strictly kept confidential and used for academic purposes only.

Please, tick (✓) the right box for each item or write in the provided space.

I. Section One : Background Information

1. Age:

2. Gender: Male Female

3. Are you an active user of multimedia software?

Yes No

4. Do you consider yourself fluent in English?

Yes No

5. Have you ever travelled abroad?

Yes No

II. Section Two: Students' Perceptions toward the Nexus of Language and Culture

6. According to you, culture is :

People's everyday life, beliefs, customs, behaviour and values.

The Country's Literature, art and music.

Both meanings.

Other meaning, specify.....

7. Is it possible to learn a language without its culture?

Yes No

8. If yes, please explain

.....

9. If no, please explain.....

.....

10. Do you think that learning about foreign cultures in an EFL classroom is....

- more important than learning about your own culture.
- as important as learning about your own culture.
- less important than learning your own culture.
- not important in an EFL setting.

III. Section Three : Integrating the Intercultural Dimension in the Oral Expression Syllabus to Develop Learners' Intercultural Communicative Competence

11. What language priorities you need an oral expression syllabus to focus on (rate the right answer)

Language Priority	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-To use grammar correctly				
-To expand vocabulary				
-To become fluent speaker				
-To become an intercultural speaker.				

12. Would you say that your oral expression courses have a wide range of cultural/intercultural materials? Yes No

13. If yes, do you enjoy them?

Yes No

14. If no, it is because....

- The cultural/intercultural content is not important.
- The cultural/intercultural content is not interesting.

- The cultural/intercultural content is difficult.
- Other reasons, specify.....

15. Please rate the importance of implementing the following skills in the oral syllabus

Skills	Not Important	Fairly Important	Important	Very Important
Cognitive Skills				
Linguistic Skills				
Cultural Skills				
Intercultural Skills				

IV. Section Four : Integrating Transmedia Storytelling in Orality-based EFL Classrooms to Enhance Learners' ICC

16. What do you think is the best way to integrate the Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) in an oral expression syllabus?

- Digital Communication Media
- Traditional Communications
- Both of them

17. Where do you get most of your intercultural encounters?

- Books Games Movies Social Media Platforms
- Webtoons/ Mangas All of them Other, specify.....

18. Would people from different countries enjoy the intercultural experience of the same transmedia storytelling; those stories that expand across different media platforms like Harry Potter and Lord of the Ring?

- Yes No

19. If yes, please explain

.....

20. If no, please explain.....

.....

21. How would you rate the choice of Transmedia Storytelling as a way to develop learners' Intercultural Communicative Competence?

- Poor
- Average
- Good
- Very good

22. Which aspect of transmedia storytelling do you think may help in developing your intercultural communicative competence?

- Its spreadibility
- Its content
- Its large consumers and fans
- All of them
- Other, specify

23. If you have any further suggestion about developing learners' Intercultural Communicative Competence, please write them here?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Thank you for your cooperation!

Appendix (L) : Students' Attitudinal Questionnaire

Dear student,

My name is Ms. Souhaila FARES, a PHD candidate in the Didactics of English as a Foreign Language and Culture. This Likert Scale is conducted to explore EFL learners' attitudes toward integrating Transmedia Storytelling in the oral expression syllabus to develop learners' Intercultural Communicative Competence. In this respect, you are kindly requested to answer the following questions. Your responses will be strictly kept confidential and used for academic purposes only.

Please, tick (√) the right box for each item. **S A D**

Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.I understand the key differences between my local culture and others' culture					
2.I can identify cultural diversities.					
3.I understand how values, history, and traditions shape cultural perspectives.					
4.I can interpret non-verbal communication in an intercultural setting					
5.I can adjust my communication style in accordance to different cultural context					

6. I can resolve cultural misunderstanding					
7.I can analyse cultural practices without bias					
8.I feel confident to interact with people from different culture.					
9.I appreciate cultural diversities					
10.I believe that differences empower personal experiences					
11.I am open to other cultural practices					
12.I am curious and not judgemental towards otherness					
13.I seek opportunities to engage with individuals from different cultural contexts					
14.I encourage collaboration between people from diverse cultural backgrounds.					

**Appendix (M) : Consent of the Head of the Department of English- Larbi Tebessi
University, Tebessa**

Souhaila FARES

Mobile :0672715162

Email : souha.fares91@gmail.com

souhila.fares@univ-khenchela.dz

Head of the English Department

Tebessa University

**Object: Consent of the Head of the Department of English – TEBESSA University to
Obtain CANEVAS**

I am, the undersigned, Souhaila FARES, a doctoral student in English as a Foreign Language and Culture at the department of English -Khenchela university. With the approval of my supervisor, Dr. BOUDERSA Nassira (ENS Assia Djabar Constantine), I would like to obtain the canvas of second-year oral expression module. This will be of great help to conduct my research.

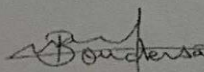
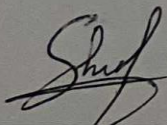
Doctoral Student

Supervisor

Head of the Department

Souhaila Fares

Dr.BOUDERSA Nassira



**Appendix (N) : Request for Consent to Conduct Classroom Observation in Oral
Expression Classes**

Souhaila FARES

Mobile :0672715162

Email: souha.fares91@gmail.com

souhila.fares@univ-khenchela.dz

Mr. A [REDACTED]

Department of English

Tebessa University

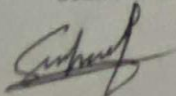
**Object: Request for Consent to Conduct Classroom Observation in Oral Expression
Classes**

I am, the undersigned, Souhaila FARES, a doctoral candidate in English as a Foreign Language and Culture at the department of English-Khenchela university. With the approval of my supervisor, Dr. BOUDERSA Nassira (ENS-Assia Djebbar-Constantine), I FARES Souhaila would like to carry out classroom observations by attending second-year oral expression classes for doctoral research purposes. Information gathered through the classroom observations will be confidential and data will be analysed for research purposes only. Your participations in the observations are of great importance to conduct the doctoral research and your contribution is highly appreciated.

Your consent is highly required for our research ethics.

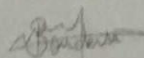
Doctoral Student

Souhaila Fares



Supervisor

Dr. BOUDERSA Nassira



Teacher Observed

Mr. A [REDACTED]



Mobile :0672715162

Email : Souha.fares91@gmail.com

souhila.fares@univ-khenchela.dz

Ms. B[REDACTED]

Department of English

Tebessa University

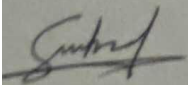
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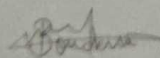
Doctoral Student

Souhaila Fares



Supervisor

Dr. BOUDERSA Nassira



Teacher Observed

Ms. [REDACTED]



Mobile :0672715162

Email : Souha.fares91@gmail.com

souhila.fares@univ-khenchela.dz

Ms. [REDACTED]

Department of English

Tebessa University

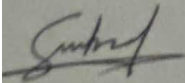
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Classes**

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Your consent is highly required for our research ethics.

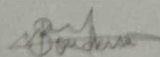
Doctoral Student

Souhaila Fares



Supervisor

Dr. BOUDERSA Nassira



Teacher Observed

Ms. [REDACTED]



Souhaila FARES

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Ms. [REDACTED]

Department of English
Tebessa University

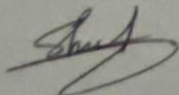
Object: Request for Consent to Conduct Classroom Observation in Oral Expression Classes

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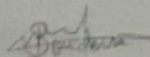
Doctoral Student

Souhaila Fares



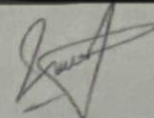
Supervisor

Dr. BOUDERSA Nassira



Teacher Observed

M. [REDACTED]



Appendix (O) : The Instructional Units (Detailed Lesson Plans)

The First Instructional Unit: Intercultural Knowledge

This unit aims at:

- a. Developing students' awareness and understanding of one's own and others' assumptions, preconception, stereotypes, prejudices, and overt and covert discrimination.
- b. Enhancing students' knowledge of the beliefs, values, practices, discourses and products that may be used by people who hold a different cultural orientation.
- c. Cultivating students' understanding of the processes wherein cultural, societal and individual interaction, and most importantly the socially constructed nature of knowledge.
- d. Developing students' awareness that English as lingua franca may express shared ideas or express the complete difference.

Session One

Module: Oral Comprehension and Expression

Level: 2nd year

Instructional Unit 1: Intercultural Knowledge

Devoted Time: 1h30

Used Materials: Movie Segments (*Star Wars*)

Objective: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to identify cultural practices of their own cultural identities, within a group discussion.

Framework Stages	Time	Rational	Procedure	Interaction Patterns
Lead-in Activity	15 Mns	To draw parallels between real-world cultures and fictional ones.	The teacher provides students with some statements and asks them the following: -Is it real-world culture or is it extracted from <i>Star Wars</i> ? -Which country or culture does it represent?	Plenary
The Listening Activity	30 Mns	-To recognize cultural segments and identify them in their real-world culture.	Students are exposed to non-continued segments of <i>Star Wars</i> and asked to imagine an ending to them that might suit the Algerian context.	Individual Work
The Post-listening Activity	45 Mns	-To develop knowledge and understanding of one's own culture and other cultures.	- Students are asked to act <i>like Star Wars</i> ' fans who are attending the movie's convention in which they meet with other international fans. -Mingle around to talk to different classmates, sharing <i>Star Wars</i> persona. -Follow up Discussion that is led by the question: "Why do you think your culture would admire(eg, the Jedi)? -After mingling, the teacher nominates fan Awards.	Pair/Group Work

Session Two

Module: Oral Comprehension and Expression

Level: 2nd year

Instructional Unit 1: Intercultural Knowledge

Devoted Time: 1h30

Used Materials: Movie/Book (*Harry Potter*)

Objective: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to deliver a short adaptable speech to a specific cultural context.

Framework Stages	Time	Rationale	Procedure	Interaction Patterns
The Pre-listening Activity	10 Mns	To activate students' schematic knowledge.	Showing students a card of speaker's corner at the Hyde Park- London and ask them what it represents.	Plenary
The Listening Activities	45 Mns	-To develop students' knowledge of differences. -To develop students' understanding of verbal/non-verbal cues in different cultural context.	-Asking students to watch <i>Dumbledore's</i> speech from <i>Harry Potter</i> to identify the patterns of the given speech. They are further asked to compare them with those in their culture. -Mingle Classroom: Students are divided into two large groups; one group has the papers that contain the key concepts and the other half has the quotes (from the book <i>Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban</i>) and ask them to mingle and find the correspondent answer.	Individual Work Group Work
The Post-Listening Activity	40 Mns	To synthesize the acquired knowledge in context.	Each student is required to choose a theme and prepare a speech using <i>Dumbledore's</i> speech as a model.	Individual work

Session Three

Module: Oral Comprehension and Expression

Level: 2nd year

Instructional Unit 1: Intercultural Knowledge

Devoted Time: 1h30

Used Materials: The Book (*Noblesse*)

Objective: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to identify cultural practices of a different cultural group (south Korean culture) and recognize similarities and differences through comparing them to their own cultures.

Framework Stages	Time	Rationale	Procedure	Interaction Patterns
Presentation	20 Mns	To activate students' schematic knowledge. To develop students' understanding of others' culture and one's own culture.	The teacher shows images and panels from <i>Noblesse</i> and ask students to notice the culture of the character and his surroundings. Then, the teacher asks to expect the cultural surprises that the character would experience if he visited their home towns.	Plenary
Practice	30 Mns	To develop students' understanding of cultural cues in different context.	Students are set in groups (jigsaw). Each group is asked to read a different section. Students work together to sketch it. As they finish, groups exchange the manga to decode the sketch into a complete story.	Group Work
Oral Production	40 mns	To synthesize the acquired knowledge in context.	Each group, then, chooses a representative to tell the story that they get from the manga sketch while the other group representative tells the original version to mark existing differences. This activity is followed by a classroom discussion.	Plenary/ Group Work

Session Four

Module: Oral Comprehension and Expression

Level: 2nd year

Instructional Unit 1: Intercultural Knowledge

Devoted Time: 1h30

Used Materials: The Movie/ Digital Media (*Lord of the Rings*)

Objective: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to identify cultural perceptions, values, and practices in *Lord of the Rings* and compare them to their own culture in a spoken discussion.

Framework Stages	Time	Rationale	Procedure	Interaction Patterns
Presentation/ Lead-in	15 Mns	To activate students' schematic knowledge, build their curiosity, and introduce them to TC.	The teacher presents culture cards of different groups within the movie and asks students what lifestyle each card represents.	Plenary
Presentation/ Input	20 Mns	To introduce cultural practices in contextualized and engaging way.	Students are asked to watch short clips so that they check their answers on the previous phase, and identify new cultural traits of different cultural groups.	Individual
Presentation/ Context Setting	30 Mns	To provide input and context for discussion. To introduce the concept of convergence culture.	Students are provided with pieces of paper that contain fan comments and asked to mingle in the classroom to find a partner who has a piece of paper containing a quote from the book that goes with the comment (Comments are extracted from a real social media platform).	Plenary/ Group Work

Oral Production	25 Mns	To encourage students to compare cultures in a supported intercultural environment.	Role play/comparing middle-earth groups with students' real-world culture.	Pair Work
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The Second Instructional Unit: Intercultural Skills

This unit aims at developing students' intercultural skills:

***Skills of interpreting and relating:** Developing new perspective through comparing and contrasting.

***Skills of discovery and interaction:** Recontextualization/ verbal and non-verbal communication.

Session One

Module: Oral Comprehension and Expression

Level: 2nd year

Instructional Unit 2: Intercultural Skills

Devoted Time: 1h30

Transmedia Material: *Hunger Games* (the movie and the book)

Objective: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to recognize, relate to, and respond to differences in an intercultural context.

Framework Stages	Time	Procedure	Materials
<p>Pre- Activity Stage</p> <p>Processing Stage</p> <p>Follow- up Activities</p>	<p>10 Mns</p> <p>50 Mns</p> <p>30 Mns</p>	<p>Part One:</p> <p>Activity One/ Classroom Discussion: An instructional scaffolding of key concepts (franchise/transmedia stories) is a prerequisite for this course. It is highly required to identify fans of the trilogy in the group.</p> <p>Activity Two: (Jigsaw Reading): This is an approach that best brings reading to an oral classroom. It involves students in speaking and summarising skills.</p> <p>ONE STORY SPLITS IN TWO: The synopsis of the Hunger Games is to be divided into two. Accordingly, students sit in a U-shaped setting so that they can form two groups that face each other. The first half has the opening and the other half has the ending part. Once students read their halves, they start mingling around the classroom so as to ask their partners about the missing part. At the end, all students can recount the whole story.</p> <p>Activity Three: Students are asked to watch silent scenes from the movie the Hunger Games (the sounds of which are turned off) to identify what the characters are talking about. After guessing the topics, the sounds are turned on to check students' answers. (Have a fellow-up discussion about the importance of verbal and non-verbal communication).</p> <p>Activity Four: Ask students about their own non-verbal communication and otherness as well. This activity includes examples from different cultures.</p> <p>Part Two:</p> <p>Activity One: Identify the cultural theme (eg. Societal Inequality, Hope, family,..) that corresponds with the given quotes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/mgr2tLYYha4 (Part Two/ activity two) • https://youtu.be/G9VI6SEXDms (Part One/activity three)

		<p>Activity Two: Have students to watch a non-ending scene of Katniss (the female protagonist) and ask students to imagine the situation starting like this: If I were Katniss, I would.....</p> <p>Activity Three: Find national figures in your native culture that match the main characters of the story. Justify your own choices.</p>	
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Session Two

Module: Oral Comprehension and Expression

Level: 2nd year

Instructional Unit 2: Intercultural Skills

Devoted Time: 1h30

Transmedia Material: *Mulan* (Animation)

Objective: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to developing new perspectives through comparing and contrasting, and recontextualize verbal and non-verbal communication.

Framework Stages	Time	Procedure	Interaction Pattern
Presentation	20 Mns	-Students are provided with events and asked to order them in the provided storyline. With the teacher’s guidance, students arrive to the full image of the story regardless of any cultural bias.	
	20 Mns	- A classroom discussion: Identifying the two versions of the story (the Original Chinese Version and the Disney Version)	
Presentation	25 Mns	- Activity three: Under two major headings (Disney VS Chinese), students are required to distribute the key concepts using the provided Venn Diagram. The key concepts: Helping the old and sick father/ b. Filial piety/c. worshiping and respecting old ancestors/ d. Confucianism (the concept of hierarchism)/e. Equality (the emperor bowed to Mulan and she gave him a hug)/f. The concept of civilian hero. g. A non-taboo attitude over old and ancestors/h. Collectivism/ i. Individualism/ j. Male chauvinism/ k. female consciousness/ l. free and independent culture. M. traditional inheritance system	

Production	25 Mns	<p>Activity Four: Set students in a situation wherein they find themselves obliged to replace one of their family members in the military. Girls have to mention the point of disguising themselves as men. In an oral production, students talk about a strenuous day they experience there. (At this stage, students are expected to make use of the cultural elements that they have encountered through interpreting the intercultural document Mu Lan and relate them to their own culture. Paying attention to students' verbal and non-verbal communication is tremendously essential).</p>	
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Session Three

Module: Oral Comprehension and Expression

Level: 2nd year

Instructional Unit 2: Intercultural Skills

Devoted Time: 1h30

Transmedia Material: *Death Note*

Rationales: -To explore new cultures by implementing research skills and non-verbal communication understanding.

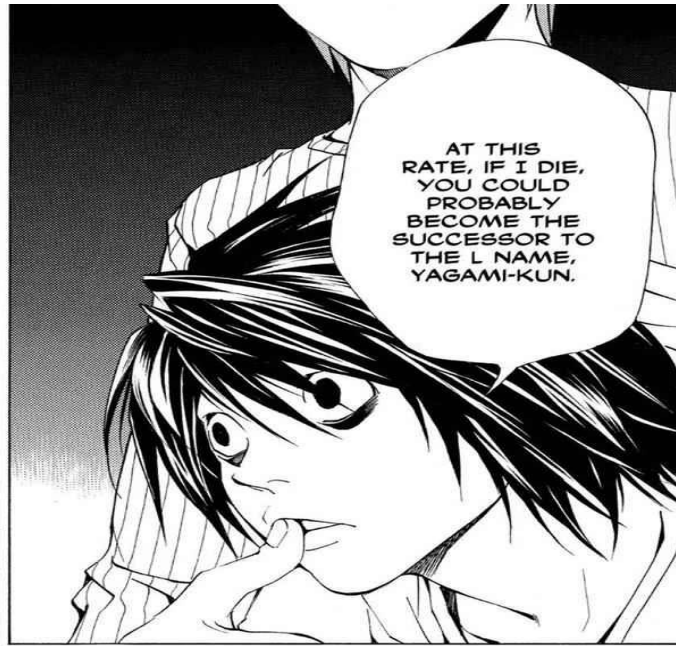
-To encounter new cultural knowledge and relate them to theirs through comparing and contrasting.

-To use a sympathetic communication strategy in an intercultural communicative setting.

Time	Procedures	Interaction Patterns
30Mns	Background of the Transmedia Storytelling: Death Note is a manga, anime, novel, game and live-action film franchise created in 2003 by Tsugumi Ohba and Takeshi Obata. In total 61 different types of media have been created around death note. *Activity One (gallery walk): In this activity, students explore multiple texts, images, posters, played-video are placed around the room. During their gallery walk, students choose a station that they feel more comfortable with to talk about in the post gallery walk discussion.	Plenary
15 Mns	*Activity Two: The instruction: Name the characters that you identify from the gallery walk. Then, rank them from the most approved to the least approved. Justify your choices.	
20 Mns	*Activity Three: During this activity, students watch a silent video conversation between the protagonists (Kira and El) to define the topic making use of their non-verbal communication.	Individual
25 Mns	*Activity Four: Under two headings (Japanese culture and American culture), students are required to differentiate between the scenes that they are exposed. (The Japanese movie and its American version).	

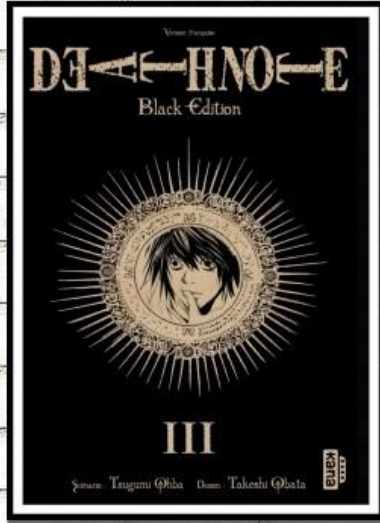
The Gallery Walk: In different stations of the classroom, the followings are distributed:













VIDEOS

Source : https://youtu.be/KIMk3AEHK_w

Source : https://youtu.be/Eb_VQ2A1A3k

Source : <https://youtu.be/Z1mcQ6CzXo8>

The Third Instructional Unit: Intercultural Attitudes

The third instructional unit intends to:

- a. Encourage learners to view cultural differences
- b. foster learners' empathy and ability to engage in meaningful intercultural interactions.
- c. Encourage learners to view cultural differences as opportunities for learning and growth.

Session One

Module: Oral Comprehension and Expression

Level: 2nd year

Instructional Unit 3: Intercultural Attitudes

Devoted Time: 1h30

Transmedia Material: The movie (Twilight)

Stages	T	Rationales	Procedure	Interaction
Presentation	15 Ms	Encourage students' openness and curiosity.	<i>Activity One/ Brainstorming Activity</i> - What do you know about "Twilight"? - Have you read the books/seen the movie? - Invite students who know them to talk briefly about either the book or the movie.	Plenary
Practice	20 Ms	Develop learners' cultural and linguistic diversity.	<i>Activity Two/ Collaborative Activity</i> - Students read in pairs a small part of the book (see the appendices) to describe what is happening. - New words are highlighted and explained (using context clues). - Students watch the film adaptation of the same scene. Discussion: - Can you notice the different Bella and Edward's pronunciations? - Can you find differences and similarities between the film scene and the book description?	Pair/ Group Work
Practice	10 Ms	Develop students'	<i>Activity Three</i> Instruction: Link the provided characters with their cultural	Individual

		sensitivity to stereotypes.	identities: Characters → Cultural Identities - Jacob Black → Native American / originally from Quileute tribe in La Push, Washington - Edward → Cranial, the white Cullens - Bella → Originally from Arizona, rebellious and anti-feminist	
Production	30 Ms	Develop students' openness to different perspectives, tolerance of differing views, and respectful communication.	<i>Activity Four</i> - Activity adopts the Oxford Debate Style. - Students divided into 'for' and 'against' groups. - Teacher mentions at the beginning that Stephenie Meyer was harshly criticised for her anti-feminism ideologies. - Students discuss the motion: <i>Is feminism culturally accepted in their own culture?</i> - Students implicitly use verbal and non-verbal communication (asking questions, listening, using gestures and physical/visual movements).	Group Work

Session Two

Module: Oral Comprehension and Expression

Level: 2nd year

Instructional Unit 3: Intercultural attitudes

Devoted Time: 1h30

Transmedia Material: *Death Note*

Objective: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to develop intercultural attitudes of openness, tolerance, and empathy by exploring cultural differences in *The Lord of the Rings*

Activity One:

Instruction: Write four sentences reflection about the following characters. Use the clues in the box below.

Gandalf / Sam / Merry/ Pippin /Elf Legolas

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Identify the character2. His/her behaviour3. The character's behaviour from a cultural perspective4. Evaluating the behaviour |
|---|

Activity Two: Ask students to watch a video of the top 5 saddest moments of the Lord of the Rings movie, the teacher asks them to choose one scene that makes them feel sad/ emotionally-driven? (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HEJbozTn69s>)

Activity Three: (*Cross the Circle if* activity)

1. Ask participants to form a circle with one person in the middle.
2. The person in the middle asks the other participants to cross through the circle if they can answer positively that they have, have done, or can do something in particular.

3. If the other participants can answer the question positively, they must cross the circle and find an open spot on the other side left by someone else who also answered the question positively.
4. The participant in the middle also finds a spot left open by someone who answered the question positively.
5. A new person is left in the middle. This person gets to pick the new statement.

While watching/reading the Lord of the Rings,

- a. I consider characters' verbal and non-verbal communication.
- b. I sometimes cry over sad scenes
- c. I imagine that I'm one of the characters and even imagine full scenes.
- d. Differences exist but I believe in similarities....

Assignment: Which part of the narratives that you feel is mostly affected by Tolkien Fandom.

Session Three

Module: Oral Comprehension and Expression

Level: 2nd year

Instructional Unit 3: Intercultural attitudes

Devoted Time: 1h30

Transmedia Material: *The Rocky Horror Show*

Objective: By the end of the lesson, students will be able to develop openness, empathy, and respect, by engaging in an intercultural environment within *The Rocky Horror Show*.

1. Presentation (15 min)

Activity One –Brainstorming

Teacher introduces students to The Rocky Horror Show through posters (Asking students what it represents)

2. Practice (20 min)

Activity Two – Transmedia Exploration

In pairs, students explore short excerpts (movie scenes, fan content, tweets on its cultural influence)

3. Practice (30 min)

Activity Three – Social Media Engagement Simulation

-In groups, students create a social media post (a story, TikTok idea, or a tweet) in reaction to *The Rocky Horror Show*.

-Each group should relate to a cultural context (Algeria, America, Brazil,...)

-Posts must reflect how they would engage with different intercultural settings.

4. Production (20 min)

Activity Four – Intercultural Discussion

-Motion: Is *The Rocky Horror Show* an inclusive cultural product, or does it only reflect certain Western values?

-Groups divided into “for” and “against.”

Assessment (20 min): Quick reflective journal entry: What intercultural attitude did you practice today?

The Fourth Instructional Unit

This unit aims at:

- a. Encouraging students to reflect on cultural values of both their local culture and the TC in an authentic intercultural setting.
- b. Developing students' ethical intercultural engagement.
- c. Addressing students' social responsibility.
 - Going through TS narratives, including: The Wire, Black Panther, The Dark Night 13th, and others of students' choice, the teacher asks students to evaluate them critically using Critical Cultural Awareness checklist.

Critical Cultural Awareness Checklist

Knowledge and Understanding

- I recognize that cultural practices reflect specific values and beliefs.
- I can identify my own cultural identity while interacting with others.

Comparison

- I compare my own culture with otherness without assuming that mine is superior.
- I evaluate cultural topics without stereotypes or bias.

Empathy and Openness

- I empathize with individuals from different cultural backgrounds.
- I show respect, sensitivity, and openness when engaging in an intercultural environment.

Relating

- I ask about the essence of cultural practices.
- I question relate different cultural perspectives to my own culture.

Reflection

- I reflect on how my cultural background impacts my perceptions.
- I admit that intercultural learning is a non-linear process.

Responsibility

- I respond to cultural differences with tolerance.
- I avoid judgmental attitudes in intercultural exchanges.

RESUME

Dans un contexte d'interconnexion sans précédent induit par la mondialisation, l'enseignement de l'anglais langue étrangère s'oriente de plus en plus vers la formation d'apprenants compétents sur le plan interculturel. S'inscrivant dans cette dynamique, la présente étude vise à évaluer l'efficacité de la narration transmédia dans le développement de la compétence communicative interculturelle des apprenants en EFL. Afin d'obtenir des résultats pertinents, nous avons adopté une approche mixte combinant les forces des méthodologies qualitative et quantitative. Dans un premier temps, nous avons examiné la charge interculturelle du programme de deuxième année en EFL au sein du département d'anglais de l'Université Larbi Tebessi, laquelle s'est révélée inexistante. Cette constatation nous a permis de valider notre problématique et de souligner la nécessité d'intégrer une dimension interculturelle. Dans un second temps, nous avons observé les pratiques pédagogiques des enseignants d'EFL tout au long du semestre, afin d'explorer et d'analyser la mise en œuvre concrète du canevas pédagogique. Pour compléter cette analyse à un niveau plus institutionnel, des entretiens approfondis ont été menés avec des inspecteurs du Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique. Suite aux résultats de cette phase exploratoire, une étude quasi expérimentale a été menée auprès d'un échantillon de 76 étudiants de deuxième année, répartis en un groupe expérimental ($n = 38$) et un groupe témoin ($n = 38$). Parallèlement, des questionnaires ont été administrés aux étudiants ainsi qu'aux enseignants du département d'anglais de la LTU. Les résultats ont montré que l'intégration de la dimension interculturelle via la narration transmédia dans le programme d'EFL de deuxième année permet un développement significatif de la CCI chez les étudiants. En effet, les participants du groupe expérimental ayant bénéficié du dispositif ont surpassé ceux du groupe témoin dans tous les aspects de la compétence interculturelle, confirmant ainsi notre hypothèse de départ. À partir de ces résultats, plusieurs implications pédagogiques et recommandations sont proposées.

Mots-clés : Anglais Langue Étrangère ; Narration Transmédia ; Compétence Communicative Interculturelle ; Programme d'Expression Orale ; Dimension Interculturelle.

ملخص

مع تسارع وتيرة العولمة، تحول تركيز تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية نحو إعداد متعلمين ذوي كفاءة تواصلية بين الثقافات. انعكاسًا لهذه الديناميكية، تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التحقيق في فعالية السرد عبر الوسائط المتعددة في تطوير الكفاءة التواصلية بين الثقافات لدى متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. للحصول على نتائج مرضية، اتبعنا نهجًا مختلطًا من خلال دمج خصائص النهج النوعي والنهج الكمي. في البداية، يدرس هذا البحث غياب البعد الثقافي في مقرر السنة الثانية لمادة التعبير الشفوي بقسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة العربي التبسي. وهذا يمكّننا من التحقق من صحة مشكلة بحثنا والتأكيد على أن البعد الثقافي مطلوب. عقب ذلك، نقوم بإجراء الملاحظة لمدة فصل دراسي لممارسات المعلمين وذلك لاكتشاف كيفية تطبيق مناهج التعبير الشفوي في ممارسات المعلمين. لسد الفجوة البحثية، يتم إجراء مقابلات متعمقة مع مفتشين من وزارة التعليم العالي والبحث العلمي. بناءً على نتائج المرحلة الاستكشافية التي أظهرت أن الكفاءة التواصلية البيثقافية لم يتم تناولها في حدود سياق دراستنا، تم إجراء تصميم شبه تجريبي على عينة من 76 طالبًا في السنة الثانية، تنقسم إلى المجموعة التجريبية (38) والمجموعة الضابطة (38). بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تم توزيع استبيانات على طلاب السنة الثانية والمعلمين في ذات قسم اللغة الإنجليزية. أظهرت النتائج التي تم الحصول عليها أن دمج البعد الثقافي من خلال السرد عبر الوسائل المتعددة في منهج التعبير الشفوي للسنة الثانية في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة العربي التبسي يطور الكفاءة التواصلية البيثقافية لدى الطلاب. يتم قياس هذا التحسن بناءً على الاختبارات الإحصائية، مما يدل على أن المشاركين في المجموعة التجريبية الذين خضعوا للتدخل التعليمي يتفوقون على المجموعة الضابطة في جميع جوانب الكفاءة التواصلية البيثقافية. بناءً على نتائج البحث، تم تحديد العديد من الانعكاسات البيداغوجية والتوصيات.

الكلمات المفتاحية: اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية؛ سرد القصص عبر الوسائط المتعددة؛ الكفاءة التواصلية بين الثقافات؛

منهج التعبير الشفوي؛ البعد الثقافي.