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Title

The Role of Social Media in Developing

EFL Learners' Intercultural Competence

Case of Study: Master Students at Biskra University

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to

My father Abderrahmane, and My mother Fatima

My dear sisters and brothers.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I thank Allah the Almighty for providing me with strength to accomplish this work.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor , **Mr. AOUNALI
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Abstract

In the recent years , social media has influenced people's lives in several aspects including education and language learning .Accordingly , the current study attempt to investigates students' attitude towards the use of social media as learning tool to develop their intercultural competence .In this study ,we opted for a qualitative research approach and descriptive research methodology .Moreover, The data collection tool used to accomplish the objective of this study is students' questionnaire. Master students of English Language department of Mohamed Khider University were identified as the participant of this study. Furthermore, the results obtained revealed that students have positive attitude towards the effectiveness of using social media as learning tool to develop their intercultural competence . Our research suggested some recommendations for teachers to raise their students intercultural competence by designing online exchange programs they are also advised to use authentic materials whereas for students they are recommended to use the blogs that provide information about cultures such as the travelling blogs they are also advised to be engage in online cross cultural programs .the syllabus designer are recommended to focus more on the component of culture while designing an English course. As result, the findings of this research confirmed the main research question .

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ICT : Information and Communication Technologies..

IT: Information Technologies.

IC : Interculture Competence .

CQ : Cultural Quotient.

EFL : English as a Foreign Language.

% : Percentage.

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INTRODUCTION

The present day witnessed an advancement in the field of communication. The modern technology introduced many ways of communication such as social media which have become an important part of our daily lives. The social media platforms such as facebook, instagram, youtube, twitter, and blogs have many benefits in different domains including business, economy, tourism, trade, and education.

Recently this social networking sites are considered as learning platform that enables learners to access information quickly, exchange knowledge, and communicate with each other easily. Moreover, in the field of language learning social media is effective tool for learning because it enables the language learners to enhance their language skills and it gives them the opportunity to learn more about the target culture through the interaction with the native speakers. Moreover this media allows the language learners to be aware of the cultural aspects of target culture by providing authentic sources.

1- Statement of the Problem

Foreign language learning is not an easy task because it requires more than grammatical phonological, and lexical knowledge. In fact it requires the contribution of different factors such as the psychological factors including the attitude of learners towards the language ,motivation, and self esteem. In addition to the contribution of cultural competence which is the central obstacle that language learner face in their language learning process .In order to achieve an effective language learning ,the learners should be aware of the cultural aspects of the target language such as values, beliefs, customs, and religion along with the knowledge of sociocultural aspects

.Thus, developing intercultural competence is a must for language learners which Occurs through the exposure to the target culture using textbooks,videos,audios.

recently the social networking sites are considered to be an effective tool for developing intercultural competence because this media allows the language learners to be exposed to authentic sources about the target culture and it also gives them the opportunity to interact with native speakers .Thus ,using this social networking sites may be an effective tool for language learners to developing their intercultural competence outside the classroom as an independent learning.

2- Research Questions

This research seeks to answer the following research questions:

Q2:What are the main strategies to develop intercultural competence ?

Q3:Can the use of social media develop the intercultural competence?

Q4:How do students perceive the use of social media as learning learning tool?

3- Research Hypotheses

Based on the above research questions, we propose the following research hypothesis

Rh1: If EFL students use social media as learning tool , they will develop intercultural competence

4- Aims of the Study

- General aim:

This study aims to investigate the role of social media in developing intercultural competence

- Specific aims:
 - a.** To investigate the strategies used by learners in order to develop their intercultural competence
 - b.** To determine if the use of social media can develop intercultural competence
 - c.** To determine the perception of students about the use of social media as learning tool to develop their intercultural competence

5- Research Methodology

- Research Approach

This research aims to investigate the role social media as learning tool in developing EFL learners intercultural competence .Therefore,qualitative approach is adopted in order to gather and obtain data.In order To validate our research aims the data collection method will be used in this regard is the students' questionnaire to identify their attitude towards the effectiveness of social media as learning tool to develop their intercultural competence and also to determine their strategies in developing such skill .

6- Population & Sample

The population of this study will be the Master students of Mohamed Khider Biskra .In this regard. A random sample is selected .we will opt for master students because they are the more familiar of the concept of intercultural competence .

7- Literature Review

The present literature review is mainly concerned with defining the important concepts in order to provide an insight to the topic.

Amedie(2015) considered knowledge as powerful tool .However, not all people realize how powerful social media has became. This technological applications enables anyone online to access and gain information. In this globalized world there is no doubt that social media has significant role in impacting the cultures, economy, and other life aspects. people use social media to share ideas, connect with each other, mobilize a cause ,and seek for advice. this new technological applications has transformed the world into small village and allows all people from different parts of the world who shares same interests to interact with each other, such as students .

Azhar(2017) stated that social media enables people from different parts of the world to interact with each other despite the cultural, regional, lingual, religious, racial, social believes. Unlike any other type of communication, social media allows people to express themselves freely. this social media applications permits for people from different countries to know about each other's customs, traditions, norms, values. thus, social media is considered to be a mean of promoting for national cultures. Social media is dominating our daily lives and becoming a powerful tool of communication because it made the world a global village by allowing people to share and exchange ideas, believes, cultures, norms, values, Hence, this platform is seen as mean of transferring and promoting cultures and beliefs around the world.

Culture is an essential part in freeing language learning for this reason it is incorporated in teaching and learning .For long time ,the concept of culture has been the main concern of several anthropologists, sociologists, and social scientists due to its importance this scholars have tried to provided a suitable definition to it. The roots

of The word culture derived from the latin word "cultura", which means to tend to the earth and grow, or cultivation.

Later on, the meaning of culture shifted to be inclusive .This concept was defined by Messerehi (2008) as "the set of practice, codes and values that mark a particular nation or group :the sum of 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 the arts, and small 'c' culture of attitudes ,values ,beliefs, and everyday lifestyles" (,p.14). Sasani(2018) further added "these days culture is seen as a dynamic concept which is ever changing and persistently re-created. Even though culture has always been changing, the speed of this change has recently accelerated as the interactions among people of different cultures have increased through technology, immigration, business , exchange of information and other factors" (p.24).The notion of culture is very broad and complex in terms of its definition because it interferes in all life aspects and it involves many layers of meaning. Thus, the scholars have faced difficulties to set a specific definition to it .

The intercultural competence is the central component of this research .Thus providing definition to it is needed .According to Deardroff (2006) Intercultural competence can be defined as the ability to develop certain knowledge, skills, and attitudes about target culture to achieve a successful intercultural interaction. In simple words Intercultural competence is the ability to understand the culture of other people as well as being equipped with certain knowledge ,attitude, and skills in order to achieve a successful intercultural communication

GENERAL

INTRODUCTION

Chapter one :

Social Media

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Introduction

In this contemporary world, the revolution in information and communication technologies has changed and affected human lives in many domains. Such as business, marketing, economy science, trade, education, and other fields. Today in the field of education integrating technology with learning helped learners to engage in flexible learning where they can access information anytime and anywhere. Media users use social media for multiple reasons, mainly to connect and interact with each other, to gain knowledge, and for sharing content. Nowadays, social media are used as a learning platform whether for formal or informal learning.

Recently, social media is gaining significant importance in the field of language learning. The Language learners are using this platform for enhancing their language and communication skills, gain knowledge about target culture, and for developing their intercultural competence. In this respect, the present chapter will provide an insight into the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and then it will shed light on the concept of social media. It will start with defining the concept by different scholars. Next , it will give an overview of its appearances .In addition, it will mention its types and its characteristics. Moreover, this chapter will also focus on its most used types in the educational context. Finally, this chapter will demonstrate the importance of social media in education and it will spotlight on its most used tools to develop the foreign language learners intercultural competence.

1.1 Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

The present-day has witnessed several revolutions ,especially in the field of **ICT**. This technological revolution has affected all aspects of human life. Therefore, it becomes a fundamental element in our daily lives. The acronym ICT stands for " Information and Communication Technology ". ICT is broader term for Information Technology (IT). According to Blurton (2002) "ICT is a diverse set of technological tools and resources used to communicate, to create, disseminate, store, and manage information "(p.1).This definition emphasis the most common applications of ICT."This definition focuses on The ICT-related technology equipment .

Briefly, ICT include all technologies such as the internet, hardware, software, digital devices, and all web.2.0 tools such as social media. This latter is the most used by the net users.

1.2 Definitions of Social Media

Social media comes under the umbrella of ICT. It appeared with the emergence of the web 2 .0 communication tools. Such as mobile phones, laptops, and tablets. Researchers and scholars have proposed various definitions for the term social media. For instance Kaplan and Haenlein(2010) defined social media as ‘’ a group of internet-based applications that build on an ideological and technological foundation of web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content (p.61).The main focus of this general definition is mainly on the most distinctive feature of social media which is communication.

Another definition was provided by Monica et al(2019) "Social media is a channel that is provided by social media platform with offers advanced features as well as functions which support social networking such as sharing, ideas,

information, knowledge" (p.484). In the same view Fanco, Heibergret, and Loken(2011) stated that" social media are a collection of internet websites, services, and practices that support collaboration, community building, participation, and sharing"(p.119).In the last two definitions, the scholars focus on the functionality of sharing and collaboration of social media. The term social media refer to as Web 2 .0 which is defined by Kalpen and Helein(2010) as "Web 2.0 is a term that was first used in 2004 to describe a new way in which users utilize the world wide web as a platform where content and applications are not published by individuals, rather all users collaborate to build and publish them" (p.60).In short, the Web 2.0 is the new version of worldwide web ,it appeared with new application that permits for the user to create and share content.

In order to provide a simple explanation for the term social media Vemulatonda (2018)suggested splitting the term into two parts: Social , which refers to the interaction with other people and media, which refers to the communication medium. Thus, social media refer to the interaction with other users through the use of communication tools such as Facebook.

All the above definitions of social media provide an understanding to the concept of social media and its major functionalities, but setting a single definition that encompasses all functionalities and concepts related to social media is impossible.

1.3The History of Social Media development

According to Fang (2015), and Harvery (2015) the development of today's social media went through many phases. The appearance of social media started in 1969 when the ARPANET was established as a communication tool between four

universities. Then, in 1971 the first E-mail was invented by computer engineer Ray Tomlinson. Five years later Ward Christensen and Randy Suess launched the first public Bulletin Board System(BBS) that allowed users to login, connect, with each other, and read news and bulletins. By 1979 Tom Truscott and Tim Ellis, from Duke University had created the USENET a worldwide discussion system.

The early phase of social media as we know it today probably started with the creation of(WeBlog) as a type of online chat .Next, Six Degrees.com in 1997 was considered the first social media platform. Later on, in 2001 Wikipedia Started as a side website of Nupedia which allowed users to publish article. The new era of social media began with Friendster that was launched in 2002, and Linkedlar which was launched in 2003, The first social networks published in 2003 were Myspace and Skype. In 2004 Facebook was first launched at Harvard University by Mark Zukerberg. After that in 2005 Google and Youtube were launched. A year later Twitter and Instagram appeared in 2010 (as cited in Vemulakonda.,2018)

From this brief history of the development of social media. It can be conclude that The evolution of social media will not stop here, but it will continue to evolve. Due the the rapid technological development A new websites and applications will emerge .

1.4Types of Social Media

Many researchers have classified social media into different types. However, this paper mainly focuses on one classifications. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) classified social media into Six types. collaborative projects, blogs, content communities, social networking sites, virtual game worlds, and virtual social worlds. They explained them as follows :

The first type is ‘collaborative projects ‘ under this type, there are two categories : the first is Wikis which are websites that allow users to share content. It includes the online Encyclopedia and Wikipedia. The second type is social Bookmarking Applications which allow users to organize the internet links. Additionally, The second type is Blogs, which are considered the as earliest form of social media. Blogs and Microblogs are viewed as personal web pages where individuals can communicate with each other, the most common Bogs and Microblogs are Twitter, Groups Com, and Word Process Com.

The third type is Content Communities. the main function of this type is sharing Media content between users. The most common types are Youtube, Flickr, and SlideShare. Moreover, The fourth type is Social Networking Sites. It enable users to connect by creating personal information profiles, inviting each other, send and sharing information (texts, pictures, videos) . The social networking sites are used mostly by the young generation. One of the most common social networking sites is Facebook. Next, The virtual game world is the fifth type of social media. It is online platform where users can participate in games as an avatar in the virtual world . The World of Warcraft is one of the most famous virtual games. And the final type is the virtual social world, It give the users the opportunity to choose the behaviour of their virtual avatar personality to live the virtual life as they live in their real.

1.4.1 Social Networking Sites

Social networking sites or social network are considered as platform for communication that comes under the term ‘social media’. They are the most used type of social media, especially among the young generation. According to Boyd and Ellison (2007) social networking sites can be defined as" Web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded

system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system"(p .211).This definition focus on the function of

Creating sharing profiles, Another definition was given by Kaplan and Haenlein(2010) "Social Networking sites are applications that enable users to connect by creating personal information profiles, inviting friends and colleagues to have access to those profiles, and sending E-mails – and in start messages between each other" (p. 63).This definition also focus on creating personal content mainly among. In the same view, Beal (2007) defined social networking sites as the websites that help users from online communities. To interact with one another, through software. It also allows the users to create profiles and share videos, pictures, ideas, and other sorts of posts.

In short, Social networking sites can be viewed as online communication tools where users can create profiles in order to interact with each other for the sake of sharing thoughts and ideas, express their feelings, and exchange information. Therefore, the main role of (SNS) is to reinforce the social relationships between people but we cannot neglect that these platforms are today used for other purposes.

1.5Characteristics of Social Media

There are several essential characteristics that all social media applications share. Myfield (2008) identifies five characteristics ; namely, participation, openness, conversation, community, and connectedness .These five characteristics are discussed below:

1.5.1Participation

Participation is one of the most distinctive features of social media that allow users to be engaged and take part in social interaction. Myfield (2008) stated that social media encourage contribution and feedback between users.

1.5.2 Openness

Openness is another feature shared by most social media applications. According to My field (2008), social media openness allows feedback and participation . This media platform encourages voting, comments, and sharing of information. The openness of social media allows any user to access and create content.

1.5.3 Conversation

Social media shifted from the traditional media, broadcasts, such as television, newspaper, and magazines which are about transmitting and distributing content to the audience to “ two-way-conversation” which is a kind of transmission in which both participants are involved in the process

1.5.4 Community

Because of social media individuals and organizations can now rapidly form communities. This distinctive feature of social media allows users with common interests to communicate early and establish relationships or create communities.

1.5.6 Connectedness

Social connectedness according to Bell, Simolders, Jsselsteijn, and Kort (2009) can be defined as "The experience of belonging and relatedness between people"(p.1). In other words, social media refers to what make people connected. Connectedness is one of the essential features that contribute to the evolution of social

media because through this latter users can experience connectedness to the outside world.

1.6.1 Facebook: Social Networking Site

Facebook is considered to be the most popular social networking site in the world. According to recent statistics, the number of users by the end of 2021 was 2-9 billion users monthly. Taprial and Kamar (2012) stated that Facebook was launched in 2004 as social networking service and website . first it was created in order to link the students of Harvard University by Mark Zurkerberg. But later on, it expanded to include other universities and in 2006 it become more popular among all people around the world.

According to Padyab, Stahlbrost, Paivarinta, and Kareborn (2016) Facebook is a global social network (OSN) site that enables users to present themselves via an online profile where they can post images, comments, and update status. This platform gives the opportunity to users to share their personal information.

1.6.2 Facebook as an Educational Tool :

Nowadays, Facebook is used to support and promote learning due to its accessibility to everyone and everywhere. This platform has many positive outcomes in different learning areas for instance in language learning Facebook can be an effective tool for EFL learners to improve their language skills this network can provide learners with educational pages, links, posts, and videos which allow students to benefit from writing, reading, speaking, and listening activities through Facebook learners can be engaged in chat groups and discussion which gives them the

opportunity to practice their English with native speakers and build a cultural understanding of target culture.

According to Tunde-Awe, several studies have revealed that Facebook a social networking site can serve as a tool for language learners in order to achieve authentic interaction with native speakers and improve their English language performance. Additionally , Awe (2015) conducted a study which revealed the use of Facebook as an informal learning tool by language leaeners in order to establish a cross cultural communication. He also stated that Facebook can be used to find effective materials for language learning.

1.7Blogs as an Educational Tool

Blogs are considered an effective tool for collaboration, and sharing, That is why it is recently been used in marketing, business, and also in teaching and learning. According to Faizi, Al Afia, and Chiheb(2013)" Blogs are web-based logs or journals that enable users to post their thoughts, ideas, and opinions for other people to view" (p.50).the blogs are mainly used to publish articles, journals,and free writings where users can express their thoughts

.In the same view, Manning added (2014) " The world blog is derived from the word weblog. A blog is a web page where an individual or group can share information or ideas with a large group of people via the internet" (p .1159).In short, this definition mainly focuses on the function of sharing of blog which makes it a useful tool for sharing. Another definition was given by Taprial, Kammar(2012) "blog can be defined as the chronological arrangement of a collection of text, image, and other media objects recorded and retrievable through web browser"(p.21).

The use of the blog in an educational context can be beneficial because it promotes learning autonomy. **B**logging is useful for learners to improve their writing skills, whether for formal or informal writing. It gives the learners the opportunity to write for a public which allows them to receive feedback from different perspectives. In a study done by Froutan, Noordin, and Hamzah (2013) they revealed that blogging can promote learners writing autonomy. Their study concluded that these tool are useful in enhancing learners writing in raising learners' autonomy. Additionally, the blogs give the learners the opportunity to practice their communication skills where they can exchange ideas, perspectives, and thoughts with people with similar interests. It also allows them to be engaged in fruitful discussions. To sum up, blogs are innovative tools that are used not only for collaboration and sharing but also for learning outside of classrooms as a independent learning tool.

1.8 Advantages of Social Media :

There are various advantages of using social media in the field of education .the most frequent are listed below :

1.8.1Enhancing Learning :

The use of social media has contributed to the development of learners' educational achievement through the use of several beneficial sources available online such as educational videos, e-books, articles, educational websites, and learning via video calls.

1.8.2Increasing Creativity

Social media helped learners to be more creative because it is an environment where learners can expand their world vision, and acquire new skills. It can also allow learners to realise their potential and discover hidden talents and hobbies.

1.8.3 Increasing learners' Familiarity with New Technology

The extensive use of technology has developed the learners' familiarity with computers and electronic devices. Along with this, they also developed new technological skills which serve to evolve their cognitive skills.

1.8.4 Enhancing Academic Performance

Social media helped learners to improve their academic performance because social media is a dynamic environment where learners can benefit from the different functionalities of social media to enhance their academic performance.

1.8.5 Socializing

An important feature of social media allowing learners to communicate with their peers and with people who share the same interests as they do. Additionally, being engaged in collaboration / international programs gives them the opportunity to be more open to the world and to be more socialized.

1.9 Disadvantages of Social Media

Despite the several benefits of social media, it also has disadvantages. The following are the common ones.

1.9.1 Reducing Learning and Research Proficiency

The overuse of social media will make the learners more dependent on the information available online since they are easy to access. This will decrease learners' research proficiency.

1.9.2Causing Distraction

Social media is a major source of distraction learners lose their focus and concentration when technology is present because they prefer browsing on social media rather than studying or doing their tasks.

1.9.3Causing Privacy Issues

The private information of online users are not secured on all social media platforms. Most users especially youth share too much personal information on their social media profiles, which can cause them serious consequences if they get hacked.

1.9.4Causing Health Problems

The use of technology devices may harm the users if they use them for a long time. some of the major health problems caused by the extreme use of these devices is eye strain, insomnia, anxiety, and depression.

1.9.5Leading to Social Problems

Social media reduce the real contact because the users spend most of their time on social media and they tend to choose virtual communication and discussion rather than real-life communication which has to lead a decrease in human relations..

1.10 Importance of Social Media in Education

Social media has gained importance in all domains, especially in business, marketing, communication and education. Learners use social media for many purposes but lately, they are using social media as an educational tool to improve their learning. Many researchers and scholars have encouraged the integrate social media tools in learning due to their benefits. Kumar and Raja (2018) stated the benefits of using social media in education .they explained them as follows :

1.10.1 Social Media as Communication Channel

Communication is one of the most important factors to achieve a successful learning-teaching process. For this reason, students and teachers are using social media as a means of communication. Teachers are using social media to communicate with their students in order to help them to overcome the difficulties they encounter in their learning process while students are using these tools to keep in touch with their teachers and peers. Social media tools have changed the way teachers and students communicate with each other. Through platforms, they created a new learning space which is more dynamic and flexible.

1.10.2 Social Media as Engagement Tool

Social media is an effective tool to engage students in the learning process. These platforms allow students to be a part of constructing their learning experience and it gives them the opportunity to express their thoughts. Also, they suggested that social media provide students with rich resources and useful learning materials. Integrating social media tools in the learning process allows students to be active learners because through these platforms students will participate in the process of learning.

1.10.3 Social Media as Collaborative Platform

Using social media for collaborative learning has a significant role in improving students' learning where they can exchange their ideas together in order to produce better learning outcomes. The idea of collaborative learning was not introduced with social media but it was already known in the educational context, but integrating social media with collaborative learning led to improving learning in many ways.

1.11.1 Importance of Social Media to Develop Intercultural

Competence

Social media is considered an effective learning environment for language learners where they can be exposed to authentic materials ;such as, podcasts, online videos, real conversations, and documentaries ,etc . Reid (2014) stated that authentic materials allow language learners to gain knowledge about real-life language, costumes and peoples' way of life which serve to build knowledge about target culture. Additionally, these technological tools give the language learners the opportunity for authentic interaction with native speakers which allows them to understand their language and enrich their knowledge about the target culture .As result,learners develop a cultural awareness. Thus, social media can be used to for cross-cultural communication using social network sites such as Facebook.

Furthermore, facebook is considered as learning tool to develop intercultural competence. Marek(2017) in his study suggested that culture should be an essential element of language learning .Therefore, he emphasized on that development of intercultural competence . He further add that using social media tools such as

Facebook for cross-cultural communication has a significant improvement on students' intercultural competence since it provides authentic materials .

Another study about the use of Facebook for online cross-cultural interaction was conducted by Wang(2012)in which he explored the effectiveness of using Facebook as a platform for cross-cultural collaboration programs between students since this latter is considered as virtual space for continuing interaction. From this aspect, Facebook as the most used social networking site has shown the potential to be more than a communication tool, but also a platform that can foster intercultural competence.

Another tool adopted by language learners to develop their intercultural competence is blogs. This tool promotes autonomous learning by giving students more control of their learning .In this context , Lee (2011) concluded that blogging serves as self-directed learning where the learners can develop their intercultural competence and other skills individually. In the same sense. Furthermore, Elola and Oskoz (2008) conducted a study about blog interaction among students and how it can enhance their intercultural competence and examine the different aspects of the target culture. Blogs are useful tool for social interaction that is why it is recently used for fostering intercultural competence skills.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we discussed social media with a general view. Starting from the general concept of ICT which is an umbrella term for all technologies including

social media. Then, we gave the definition of social media and what the term itself means. Also, we gave an overview of the history and evolution of social media through time. Next, we identified its most significant types. Moreover, we demonstrated the characteristics of social media that make it distinctive. Then, we shed light on the most common types of social media used in an educational context. We also mentioned the advantages and disadvantages of social media. Finally, we spotlight on its importance in educational settings, and then explained how these tools are recently used to develop intercultural competence.

Chapter Two :

Intercultural Competence

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Introduction

In this era of globalization people from different cultural backgrounds and affiliations are becoming interconnected. Thus, developing intercultural competence is needed in order to achieve an effective cross-cultural communication. People are required to be well-equipped with certain skills and knowledge to be culturally competent. This current chapter will provide an overview to the concept of intercultural competence and how to develop this skill. Initially, it will provide a definition to the concept of culture in order to better understand intercultural competence. then, it will discuss its importance.

Moreover, this chapter will set its major components and its characteristics. Next, it will discuss the concept of intercultural competence by providing a general definition to it. Furthermore, it will mention its major components. After that, it will explain why it is important to develop such skill. Lastly this chapter will present the common models to develop intercultural competence.

2 .1.Definition of culture

In order to discuss the concept of intercultural competence providing an insight into the notion of culture is important. Culture is a complex concept that several scholars and researchers from different fields and disciplines tried to define it. The anthropologist Edward Taylor (1871) proposed the first definition of culture which he stated " Culture ... is a complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society " (p.16). According to this definition by Taylor culture is acquired and shared by the same group of specific society.

Another definition was provided by Linton (2015) that culture is " "Social Heredity "of a society's members " (p.21) . From this definition, it can be concluded

that culture is not biological, but rather it is transmitted from one generation to another. Moreover, according to Tomalin and Stempleski (1993) culture is divided into two main types : culture with big C and culture with small C. The former refers to " Achievements culture" such as comprises, history, geography, institutions, literature, art, and music, while the latter refer to " Behavior Culture" (as cited in Matic.,2015) .

2.2.Importance of Culture

Learning foreign languages goes beyond linguistic knowledge . ie. Grammar, lexis, syntax, and others. The knowledge about the target culture is also a fundamental part of language learning because it allows the learners to broaden their knowledge about all the cultural aspects of the target culture which provides for the learners a better understanding of the target language. Thus , language and culture are interrelated. In other words, learning a foreign language means learning its culture as well. As Brown (1994) claimed that "A Language is a part of culture and a culture is a part of language. the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture " (as cited in Çakir).

Integrating culture in the foreign language teaching has several benefits . Tomaline and Stempleski (1993) emphasize the necessity of teaching culture to students because it helps them to comprehend that all individuals show culturally conditioned behaviors. In other words, it allows them to understand how every individual absorbs and interprets the culture around them into their own behaviors. Furthermore, it demonstrates to students how social variables such as age, gender, social classes, and areas of residence influence how people speak and behave .Moreover, learning target culture permits to the students to be more aware of conventional behaviors, as well as the cultural connotations of terms of the target

culture. Finally ,it helps the students to promote the their intercultural and empathy .(as cited in Tseg.,2019).

2.3.The Components of culture

Culture components are essential parts that distinguish one culture from another . Kaur(2016)classified a set of components that all cultures share as follows :

2 .3.1values

Values are the most important component of culture . they refer to the intangible characteristics that are accepted and shared by specific society, they include freedom, democracy, independence, education, and religion. the values can influence individuals' actions.

2.3.2Norms

Norms are a set of rules that govern a society, guide people on how to behave in different situations, and regulate the social relations between people. the norms was divided into four types ; namely, Folkways, mores, taboos, and laws. The first type of Folkways refers to the habits and conventions of daily life. On the other hand more concerned with moral and ethical values. Taboo is an action or behavior that is prohibited .In other words, it is a kind of unaccepted activity in certain society. Finally, laws are the rules established by authorities.

2.3.3Language

Language is another essential component shared by all cultures, it is the symbol by which people can communicate, share experiences, feeling, and knowledge with each other. It is considered as means of transmitting culture.

2.3.4 Mores

They are the specific rules and principles of society which determine the morals and ethical behaviors of a particular group of society. The mores are stricter than the Folkways.

2.4. Characteristics of Culture

Kumari suggested the following features which characterize culture :

2.4.1 Culture is learned :

Culture is not biological or innate, but it is unconscious and it is learned from the environment. The anthropologists refers to This process as " Acculturation " .

2.4.2 Culture is abstract :

Culture exists in the mind and behaviors of a particular group of society. In other words, people are unable to fully comprehend culture, but they can only observe human behavior.

2.4.3 Culture is shared :

People of the same social group share the same culture in which they can act in social suitable way and anticipate how others will act.

2.4.4 Culture is a way of life :

Culture refers to the way of life and behaviors shared by people of particular society.

2.4.5 Culture is idealistic :

Culture encompasses the ideals and norms of groups. It refers to intellectual, artistic, social ideas and institutions that people of particular society try to confirm it.

2.4.6 Culture is a social not individual :

Culture is the result of social interaction between human beings and their relationship with their ancestors.

2.4.7 Culture is total social heritage :

Culture is heritage transmitted from one generation to another. It is the sum of traditions which are linked to a specific society.

2.4.8 Culture fulfill some needs :

Culture refers to a set of behaviors, each behavior was designed to meet a specific need of a human being.

2.4.9 Culture is integrated system :

Culture is a result of the integration of social systems. The family systems, religious systems, educational systems, economic systems, ecological systems, and political systems.

2.4.10 Culture is dynamic :

Culture is dynamic. In other words, all cultures are interactive and change through time.

2.4.11 Culture is adoptive :

Culture is adoptive means that it is adjustable and it can be changed Through time because it is not fixed and it can go through changes.

2.4.12 Varies from society to another :

Material and non-material cultural traits influence culture, which varies from society to another one. For instance, there are differences between urban and rural society.

2.4.13 Culture is transmissive :

Culture is transmissive because it is transferred from one generation to another. In this process, The cultural elements are passed and transmitted to individuals and groups. Through language.

2.4.14 Culture is communication :

Culture is defined by a set of symbols that people exchange and communicate through. In other words, culture is symbolic communication.

2.4.15 Culture is a accumulative :

Culture cannot be constructed in month or year, it is a continuous process in which several cultural aspects are gradually combined to form one culture.

2.5. Definition of Intercultural Competence

Lately, there has been a growing interest concerning the concept of intercultural competence .Several scholars and researchers tried to provide a definition to it. According to Huber and Reynoldes (2014) intercultural competence is a mix of attitude, knowledge, understanding, and abilities applied through actions that permit people to understand and respect others from different cultural

backgrounds, as well as to understand their own culture And most importantly to interact with people them appropriately permits to establish good relationships.

Moreover, Deardroff (2006) defined intercultural competence as " The ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes". (as cited in tennekoon .,2015). This definition mainly focuses on the ability to develop targeted knowledge, skills, and attitude to achieve effective cross-cultural communication.

Another definition was provided by Byram , Gribkova,and Starkey(2002) that "intercultural competence is "the ability to ensure a shared understanding by people of different social identities, and their ability to interact with people as complex human beings with multiple identities and their individuality " (p.10).In other words, people from different backgrounds are required to have a common understanding to interact with each other effectively. To sum up, intercultural competence is the ability to use different competences and to understand the target culture in order to achieve an effective communication with people from different cultural backgrounds.

2.6.Components of intercultural competence

Deardroff (2006) presented the components of intercultural competence ; namely, knowledge, attitudes, skills.

2.6.1Knowledge :

DearDroff (2006) focused on three types of knowledge. First is cultural self-awareness which refers to how the culture influence and shape people's world vision. The next type is deep cultural knowledge about history, values, traditions, and beliefs. Lastly, social linguistic awareness is about the awareness of language skills to adjust speech for the sake of accommodation.

2.6.2 Attitude :

DearDroff (2006) stated several attitudes which are : respect openness, curiosity, and discovery. Respect refer to the appreciation of the cultural diversity while openness is to be engaged in intercultural. DearDroff stated that curiosity is to consider the difference as an opportunity to learn while discovery is about tolerating the ambiguity and to considering it as positive experience.

2.6.3 Skills :

According to DearDroff (2006) skills include listening, observation, and interpreting which refers to being patient and observant . In addition to analyzing, evaluating, and relating that refers to identifying and viewing things from different perspective .

2.7. Significance of intercultural competence

Cultural diversity refers to the process of bringing people from different cultural affiliations and backgrounds in order to create a variety of social relationships. Thus, to achieve successful intercultural interaction between these people. Gaining intercultural competence is needed to avoid misunderstanding and prejudice ,stereotype. Moreover, according to Huber and Reynoldes (2014) the intercultural interaction between people can be a means of personal development and enrichment. It also added that people with intercultural competence can better understand their own cultural elements by comparing them to others .

2.8. Models to Develop intercultural competence :

Scholars and researchers have been developing models for attaining and fostering intercultural competence. The most common models are listed below :

2.8.1 Bennett's model of Intercultural Sensitivity

Bennett's model of intercultural sensitivity was developed in 1993, it is known as the "Bennett scale" this model is considered as one of the most influential models in the field of intercultural communication. It entails six stages that a person goes through to become culturally sensitive, including denial, defense, minimization, acceptance, adaptation, and integration.

The first three stages are considered as Ethnocentric which are related to the experience of individuals to understand their own culture through others' cultures. In the first stage, denial, the individual denies the differences between cultures while in the second stage, defense, here individual accepts the cultural differences but builds barriers against those differences. The third stage is minimization, the individual accepts the cultural differences, but he does not understand them.

The last three stages are considered as Ethnorelative which refers to individuals' understanding of reality. In the fourth stage, acceptance, individual accepts and appreciates other cultures. In the fifth stage, adaptation individuals, enhance their ability to interact with people from a different culture. In the last stage, integration people value cultural diversity. (as cited in Reid, 2013). The following figure gives more details about Bennett's models to develop intercultural competence.

Ethnocentric stages	Denial	one own's culture is viewed as the only real one, other cultures are avoided, people are indifferent to cultural difference, can act aggressively
	Defense	one own's culture is viewed as the only good one, world is organized: "us and them", "we" are superior and "they" are inferior, people are threatened by cultural differences, they are highly critical of other cultures, regardless if "they" are hosts or guests
	Minimalization	one own's culture is viewed as universal, other cultures are trivialized or romanticized, people expect similarities, may become insistent about correcting others' behaviour to match their expectations
Ethnorelative stages	Acceptance	one's own's culture is viewed as just one of a number of equally complex worldviews, acceptance does not mean agreement, cultural differences may be judged negatively, people are curious and respectful toward cultural differences
	Adaptation	experience of another culture benefits perception and behaviour appropriate to that culture, one's worldview is expanded to include constructs from other worldviews, people are able to look at the world "through different eyes" and may intentionally change their behaviour to communicate more effectively in another culture
	Integration	one's experience of self is expanded to include the movement in and out different cultures

Figure 1 :Model of Intercultural Sensitivity adopted from Raid (2013)

2.8.2 Model Intercultural Maturity

The model of Intercultural Maturity was developed in 2005 by King and Boxtor Magolda. This model is based on the kagan's lifespan development Model according to his theory, mature people are better at dealing with life's complex tasks than other. Three dimension are included in kengan's model (cognitive, interapersonal, and interpersonal). The cognitive dimension refers to recognizing the cultural differences whereas the interapersonal dimension refers to accepting cultural differences. Lastly, interpersonal is about being sensitive and working with variety of people. Each of this dimension contains three levels of intercultural development: initial, intermediate, and mature. According to this model learners develop new ethnocentric understanding of other cultures to ethnorelative comprehension and appreciation during intercultural learning.(as cited in Reid ,2013) .The following figure illustrates in details the model of Intercultural Maturity to develop intercultural competence.

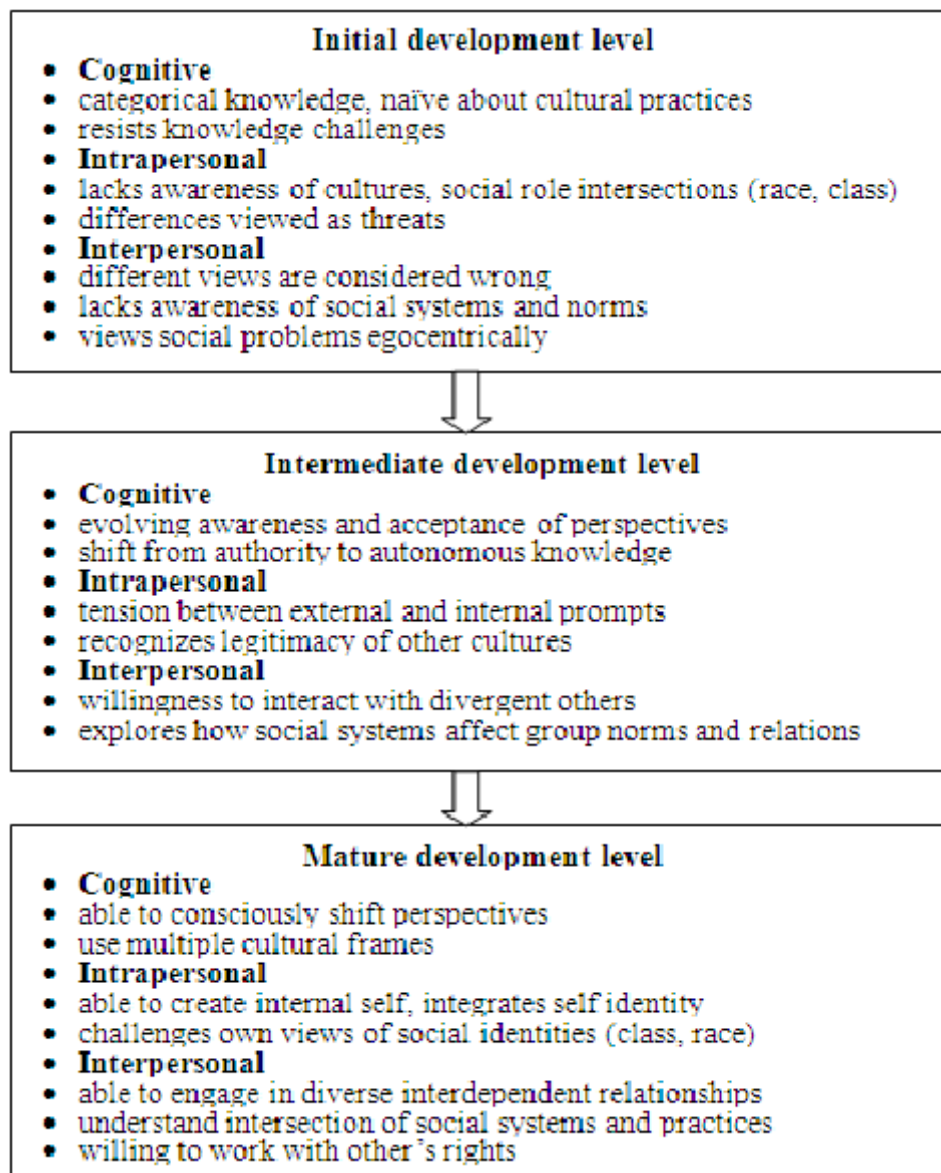


Figure 2 :Developmental Model of intercultural competence Maturity adopted from Reid (2013)

2.8.3 Byram's model

Another model of intercultural competence was developed by Byram in (1997). This model is based on communication competence. In this model Byram introduced four competencies of intercultural communicative competence ;namely ,linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and intercultural

competence Byram introduced in his model three component of IC which are : attitudes, knowledge, and skills. Attitudes refers to individuals view to the world as well as their cultural identities. The second components is knowledge Byram divided knowledge into two classifications ; first, the individual awareness of other cultures. The second, individual knowledge about speaker's country. Lastly, Byram presented two sets of skills. First skills are focused on identifying others culture and then associated it with one's , the second skills are focused on learning knowledge and how to apply it in real life situations.

Intercultural competence according to Byram consists of five basic elements or "savoir" as he refers to them :Savoir (knowledge) refers to the knowledge about essential characteristics of target culture that are related to specific people.On the other hand, Savoir être (attitudes) pertain to the cognitive ability to make a connection between one's own culture and onether's culture.Moreover ,Savoir (comprendre) refers to the ability of interpreting and relating. Furthermore ,Savoir (apprendre) Is the ability to acquire new information about a culture and its practices,as well as the ability to apply knowledge , attitudes, and skills to effective interaction.Finally,Savoir (s'engager) is the evaluation in a critical manner of one's own and others cultures.(as cited in Tran &Seepho.,2016).The following figure summarizes the model's of developing intercultural communicative competence.

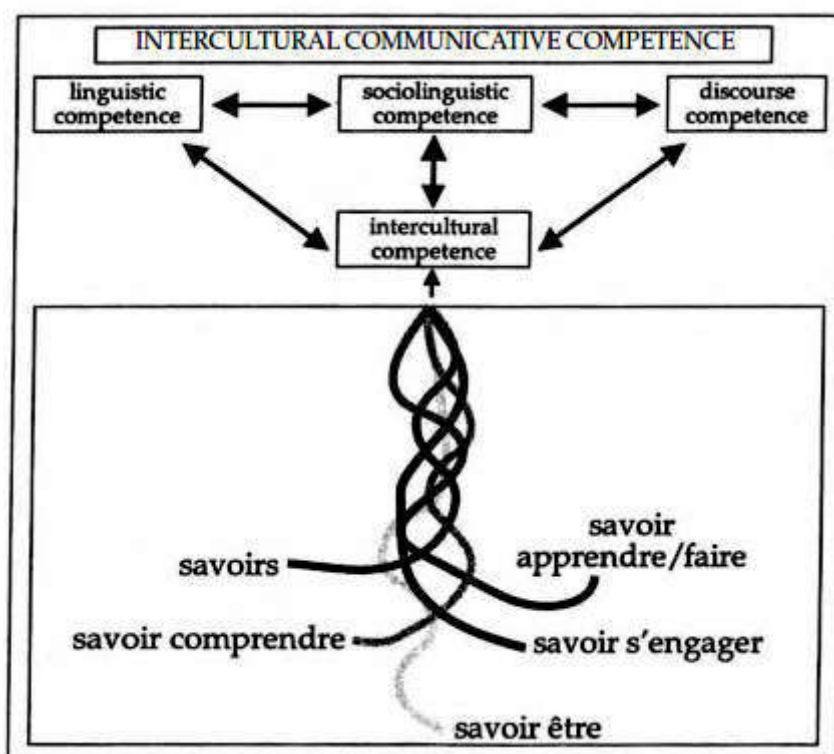


Figure 3 : Model of ICC(Byram,1997,p73) adopted from Tran and Seepho(2016°

2.8.4 Cultural Intelligence (CQ) model

The Cultural Intelligence model also known as cultural quotient (CQ), which is derived from IQ. Earley and Ang were the ones who first presented it in 2003, it was conceived as a means of bridging the gap between two disciplines: cultural studies and psychology. Earley and Ang originally defined cultural intelligence as the ability to adapt to new cultural settings. Later on a new definition was provided by Dyne and Ang to cultural intelligence as "the individual's capability to detect, assimilate, reason, and act on cultural cues appropriately in situations characterized by cultural diversity". Ang and Dyne acknowledged that cultural intelligence goes beyond comprehending cultural differences to being able to relate those characteristics across cultural.

Moreover, Earley and Ang identified three separate CQ factors : cognitive ,motivation, and behavioral .they later differentiated cognitive and metacognitive abilities, which produced four factors model including CQ Knowledge ,CQ Strategy ,CQ Drive ,and CQ Action . The CQ Knowledge refers to understanding other cultures' norms, values, and practices Whereas the CQ strategy refers to the individuals'cultural awareness during intercultural interaction. The CQ Drive indicates person's ability to focus their attention and energy on dealing with intercultural situation. lastly, the CQ Action refers to individuals adaptation of verbal and non-verbal behaviors in cross-cultural context. (as cited in Allame et al,2020)

Conclusion

To sum up, in order to master foreign language and to achieve effective cross-cultural communication students are required to focus not only on the linguistic knowledge, but they should also focus on gaining knowledge about the target culture. Therefore, this chapter aimed to provide a clear understanding to the concept of culture from different perspectives. After that, an explanation to its importance for students was needed. Then, for deeper understanding to the notion of culture this chapter presented its major components and its characteristics. Moreover, this chapter explained the central component of this research which is intercultural competence. First, it provided a several definitions from different perspectives. Next, this chapter shed light on the importance of intercultural competence. After that, it presented its major components. Finally, it spotlight on some common models to develop intercultural competence.

Chapter Three:
Fieldwork
And Data Analysis

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Introduction

The current chapter is devoted to the practical part of this research. First, it will present the research approach adopted for this study. Next, it will provide an explanation to the chosen sample. Moreover, a description of questionnaire will be provided as well as determining its aim and administration. The students' questionnaire was administered to students to investigate their attitude towards the use of social media as learning tool to develop their intercultural competence. Finally, this chapter will focus on analyzing and discussing the data obtained.

3.1 Research Methodology

In order to analyze the obtained data, we opted for descriptive research methodology and qualitative research approach. Because they are more suitable for the nature of this study.

3.2 Population and Sample

The population of this study is master student of English language at Mohamed Khaider University of Biskra for the academic year 2021/2020. An online questionnaire was administered to 30 students. The selection of sample was randomly.

3.3 Data Collection Tool

The questionnaire was adopted in order to gather the data for this study because it provides the opportunity to investigate the learners' attitude towards the effectiveness of social media as learning tool to develop their intercultural competence.

3.3.1 Administration of questionnaire

The online questionnaire was administered to the students. It was designed through google forms service. Next, it was posted in facebook group.

3.3.2 Aim of questionnaire

The questionnaire is mainly designed to collect information about students attitudes towards the use of social media as learning tool to develop their intercultural competence.

3.3.3 Description of questionnaire

The questionnaire include close-ended and open-ended questions. First, in close-ended questions students are required to answer with "yes" or "no " or to choose from the list of options or to specify the frequency While in the open-ended questions the students are required to explain or justify their answers or to add an example. This questionnaire consist of twenty-two questions classified into three sections where each section focus on specific aspects. The first section is about general information Whereas the second section is about the use of social media. Lastly, the third section refers to the students' attitude towards the use of social media to develop their intercultural competence.

Section one: general information

This section is devoted mainly to gather data about the learners background and personal information.

Section two: use of social media

This section attempt to gather data about the most used social media applications among learners , the purpose of using it , and to what extent these platform are effective in improving students language learning skills.

Section three : learners' attitude towards developing intercultural competence through social media

This section aimed to obtain data about the learners' strategies to develop their intercultural competence and to determine their attitude towards the use of social media to enhance their language learning .Next ,it attempt to determine students' awareness of the

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importance of intercultural competence .Finally ,it investigates students' strategies to develop and to intercultural competence .

3.3.4 Analysis of the Students' Questionnaire

Section One: General Information

Item 1. Would you specify your gender, please?

Tableau 1: Students' Gender

Gender	Respondents	Percentage
a) Female	26	87%
b) Male	4	13%
Total	30	100%

The results show that the majority of students are female (87 %) whereas male represent only (13%). This indicates that the females are the most dominant gender.

Item 2. Learning English at university was:

Tableau 2: Students' Choice of Learning English at University.

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a) Your own choice	27	91%
b) Your parents' choice	2	6%
c) Someone's advice	1	3%
Total	30	100%

According to the data obtained, the majority of students (91%) responded that learning english at university was their own choice Whereas (6%) of the respondents answered that it was their parents choice. The remaining respondents (3%) replies that it was someone else’s advice. This demonstrates that the english students are often motivated to choose this specialty.

Item 3. How did you find learning at university?

Tableau 3:Students’ Attitude towards the Difficulty of Learning English at University.

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Easy	6	20%
b. Somehow difficult	23	77%
c. Difficult	0	0%
d. Very difficult	1	3%
Total	30	100%

As shown in the results we can determine that the majority of students (77%) find learning English at university somehow difficult while (20%) of the students find it easy .the remaining students (3%) find it very difficult .It can be concluded that the majority of students encounter some difficulties in learning English.

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Section Two: Social Media Usage

Item 4. Do you use social media?

Tableau 4:Students' Use of Social Media

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Yes	30	100%
b. No	0	0%
Total	30	100%

As it was expected, all students(100%) indicated that they use social media because this digital generation uses and relies on social media in their daily lives. Thus , it is no surprise that they all responded with " yes "

Item 5. what kind of social media do you use? (You may choose more than one answer).

Tableau 5:The Kinds of Social Media Students Use.

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Facebook	3	10%
b. Instagram	1	3%
c. Twitter	0	0%
d. Whatsapp	0	0%
e. More than one type	21	70%
f. All of them	5	17%
Total	30	100%

The findings above, show that the majority of students (70%) use more than one types of the mentioned applications. Whereas (17%) of the students said that use all the mentioned

CHAPTER THREE : FIELD WORK AND DATA ANALYSIS

applications . The remaining student (10%) use facebook while (3 %) of students use instagram..

If others, please, specify

This sup-question required students to mention if they use other social media application. According to the data above, the following applications are the commonly used among students : Telegram,Tik tok,Viber,Ablo,YouTube, Snapchat, Reddit ,Imo. Additionally one of the responded claimed that they use Azzar application to meet people from other nationalities.

Item 6. How often do you use social media?

Tableau 6:The Frequency of Students' Use of Social Media

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Always	18	60%
b. Usually	8	27%
c. Sometimes	3	10%
d. Rarely	1	3%
Total	30	100%

As indicated in the figure above , the highest percentage of the respondents (60%) acknowledged that they always use social media. On the other hand , (27%) of the respondents replied that they usually use social media. The remaining respondents (10%) said that they sometimes use social media, and only few of them (3%) rarely use social media.

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Item 7. For what purpose(s) do you use social media? (You may choose more than one answer)

Tableau 7:Students' Reasons for Using Social Media.

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Social communication	1	3%
b. News	0	0%
c. Learning	0	0%
d. Entertainment	1	3%
e. More than one purpose	13	44%
f. All of them	15	50%
Total	30	100%

As indicated in the figure above, the majority of respondents (50%) claimed that they use social media for many reasons including : social communication , news , learning , entertainment while the(44%) said that the use this platform for more than one of this suggested purposes .the (3%) said that they use it for entertainment while the remaining (3%) claimed that they use it for social interaction

If others, please, specify

-orking marketing studying

-For work cause i promote my business

-In order to make our world easy

CHAPTER THREE : FIELD WORK AND DATA ANALYSIS

In this sub question respondents are required to specify other purpose of using social media . some participants asserted that they use social media for marketing and other for promoting their business.

Item 8. Do you think that using social media is effective for English language learning?

Tableau 8:Students' Attitude towards the Effectiveness of Social Media for English Language Learning.

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Yes	30	100%
b. No	0	0%
Total	30	100%

The objective of this item was to find out students' attitude towards the use Of social media . the findings above show that all participant (100%) find that using Social media is effective for English learning. As it was expected all participants agreed on the effectiveness of social media because this platform provide them with several educational sources.

Students' justifications

- Because we communicate with native speakers
- Because it helps improve vocabulary in addition to provide knowledge about other's culture.
- Because in social media I find and have many pages concerning teaching English and they are helpful
- It help learner to develop their skills
- It provides real exposure to English and real intercalation with native speakers of English

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-I think communication of all kinds is effective for learning a language. Social media provides this exposure to the English language and allows us to communicate using that language.

-with social media we can communicate with native speakers which give us an opportunity to communicate with them without going abroad

-Social media is part and partial in our live, it helps in improving learner's listening, speaking, reading and writing through learning and discovering new vocabulary through social media to develop their communicative skills.

From the above justification, we can conclude that almost all students shared a common opinion that social media is effective for English learning in terms of proving a real exposure to the English language through the interaction with native speakers.

Item 10. Can you specify some skills that social media have helped you to enhance?

-Vocabulary.

-Writing skill, vocabulary and speaking skill.

-Reading, writing, and listening.

-Speaking, reading, listening.

-Reading magazines.

-Speech and knowledge about the language.

-Pronunciation.

-Communication skills

-Listening skills, writing skills, learning skills.

-reading and speaking skills and somehow writing skill.

-It helps me to improve Speaking and listening skills.

This question aimed to find out whether social media have helped students to help their language skills or not. As it is noticed from the answers above , all the students affirmed that using social media helped them to improve their language skills.

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Section Three: Learners' Attitudes towards Developing Intercultural Communication through Social Media

Item 11. In your view, learning languages is more effective when it focuses on:

Tableau 9:The Most Effective Focus of Language Learning

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Linguistic knowledge	7	23%
b. cultural knowledge	6	20%
c. Both	17	57%
Total	30	100%

This proposed question aimed to figure out what is the main focus of student while learning English. Based on the the findings presented in the figure above, (57%) of the students claimed that to achieve an effective language learning they mainly focus on both the linguistic and cultural knowledge. Whereas (23%) of students indicated that they focus on linguistic knowledge only. The remaining students (20%) asserted that they focus on the cultural knowledge . this indicates that some students are aware of the importance of both the linguistic and cultural knowledge to achieve a successful language learning whereas the rest are not.

Item 12. Are you interested in learning other cultures/target culture?

Tableau 10:Students' Interest in Learning Other Culture/Target Culture

This proposed question aimed to figure out what is the main focus of student while learning English. Based on the the findings presented in the figure above, (57%) of the students claimed that to achieve an effective language learning they mainly focus on both the linguistic and cultural knowledge. Whereas (23%) of students indicated that they focus on linguistic knowledge only. The remaining students (20%) asserted that they focus on the cultural

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knowledge . this indicates that some students are aware of the importance of both the linguistic and cultural knowledge to achieve a successful language learning whereas the rest are not.

Item 12. Are you interested in learning other cultures/target culture?

Tableau 11:Students' Interest in Learning Other Culture/Target Culture

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Yes	28	93%
b. No	2	7%
Total	30	100%

The above results shown that the majority of students (93%) said that they are interested in learning other cultures however only s (7%) said that they are not interested in learning other cultures. This demonstrates that most of the students are interested to learn about target cultures because they believe that it is important to achieve effective language learning and also to develop their intercultural awareness .

Students' justifications

1)For 'Yes'

-I want to discover the world.

-New language new culture.

-Yes , since I want to enrich my knowledge.

-I like being cultured i mean having a knowledge about everything.

-Cause it's fun.

-Broaden my horizons and knowledge of the world.

-Learning a culture of the target language helps to integrate in the culture and in thinking in the target language, cuz thinking with L1 and producing with the foreign language will make problems in word choice and fluency.

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-I find cultures across the world very fascinating and interesting. I'd love to learn about them because it tells a lot about who we are as humans.

2)For 'No'

-I'm not interested in learning it in English

-I interested in learning speaking

What is remarkable from these explanations that most of students are aware of the importance of learning the target culture .

Item 13. Do you think that learning the cultural aspects (costumes, values, beliefs, religion) of the target culture is necessary?

Tableau 12:The Necessity of Learning about Cultural Aspects

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Yes	26	87%
b. No	4	13%
Total	30	100%

As identified in findings above , the majority of students (87%) acknowledged that learning the cultural aspect of target culture is necessary however (13%) of students did not think that learning the cultural aspect of target culture is important.

Students' justifications

1)For 'Yes'

-For example, learning the target language's idioms and collocations would be easier if its culture is understood well.

-Learning about the target culture is necessary because it allows you to communicate and understand its people better

-Sometimes in order to understand the linguistic context of text u need to know to have background knowledge or some cultural aspect

-Helps understand the native speech and interaction will be much easier

-Some phrases cannot be translated from a language to another because of the religious values of each language. For example "blessed be the fruit" it is a phrase that cannot be translated to Arabic because of its religious background which doesn't exist in Arabic as the language which represents Islam

-To understand any context.

-Yes, it's very necessary because you simply can't separate language from its social or cultural aspects. I believe that half of communication is a reflection of someone's cultural background. Therefore, learning about this aspect is very necessary in order to effectively communicate between members of society.

-It helps especially to communicate with others and understand the implicit meaning

2)For 'No'

-It's not ,since one can use internet

-It is an add

-We didn't need them in our lives and studies

-Being familiar with the target language culture is something important, but learners can simply get enough with learning the language itself. Learning

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From the above justification we can clearly deduce that the students are interested to learn the cultural aspects of target language because they believe that learning the cultural aspects of target language is important because it helps them to enrich their knowledge Which serves to develop their intercultural awareness.

Item 14. Do you think being familiar with similarities and differences between your own culture and target culture is necessary?

Tableau 13:Students' Familiarity with Similarities and Differences between their Own Culture and Target Culture

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Yes	24	80%
b. No	6	20%
Total	30	100%

The figure above illustrates that most of the students (80%) are familiar with similarities And differences between their own culture and target culture. On the other hand, (20%) Of students' stated that they are not familiar with these similarities and differences between their own culture and target culture.

Students' justifications

1)For 'Yes'

-It is beneficial for avoiding cultural misconceptions when it comes to dealing with other the target language native speakers.

-Maybe for the sake of cultivating yourself or to avoid situations of being misunderstood when dealing with foreign people

-Knowing about the differences and similarities is interesting to know about others' way of thinking even though we have similarities for example but we are different in others.

-Of course to avoid misunderstanding

-To not miss understand natives when interacting with them

-English native Speaker say "God bless you". It's normal to hear it and maybe we will like it if it is told to us, but if we think about its religious background, we will find that they are talking about their own God and they want him to bless us. That's why involving in the culture is recommended in every target language.

-Yes. Being familiar, or being able to identify the similarities and differences is a proof that you are culturally aware about the target language.

2)For 'No'

-Each country has its own culture.

-we do not need to compare them because each language has its own rules.

-Because we can succeed to learn such target language without be familiar with its culture.

-Sometimes we have the same thinking and it is normal to be a similarities and differences.

-Knowing their culture is enough without comparison with our culture.

-the focus is on the target culture.

Students' justifications demonstrated that the general idea shared by students is that knowing the differences and similarities between different cultures allow them to develop intercultural awareness to avoid the misunderstanding and stereotyping .

Item 15. Do you use social media to interact with people from other cultures?

Tableau 14:Students' Use of Social Media to Interact with People from other Cultures

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Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Yes	24	80%
b. No	6	20%
Total	30	100%

As clearly shown on the above figure, most of students (80%) affirmed that they use social media platform to interact with native speakers , however remaining students (20%) stated that they do not use social media for interaction with native speakers. As results , we can deduce that English students use social media tools to interact with native speakers because it allows them to enhance their communication skills.

Item 16. How do you evaluate your awareness of the English culture?

Tableau 15:Students' Self-evaluation of their Awareness of the English Culture

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Poor	3	10%
b. Acceptable	20	67%
c. Good	7	23%
d. Excellent	0	0%
Total	30	100%

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From the table above, we can clearly deduce that the highest percentage (67%) claimed that they have an acceptable level of cultural awareness in English. However, (23%) acknowledged that they have a good level of cultural awareness. And only few of them (10%) said that they have a poor level of cultural awareness. No one among the students said that they have an excellent level. In short , we can say that students' level of cultural awareness ranges from acceptable to good.

Item 17. Did your knowledge about foreign countries and their cultures increase through online interaction?

Tableau 16:Students’ Responses about whether their Knowledge of the Foreign Countries and Their Cultures Increased through Online Interaction or Not.

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Yes	27	90%
b. No	3	10%
Total	30	100%

As the table illustrates , the majority of students' (90%) believe that the online interaction Increase their knowledge about the foreign countries and their culture. The (10%) of Students did not think that the online interaction is effective. In short , we can say that most of student are aware that the Online interaction with native speakers is effective to develop students' knowledge about the target culture.

Item 18. How do you feel when you communicate with someone from a different culture?

-More interested to know more about their culture and traditions

-It's normal nowadays not big deal

-Exited

-Grateful and happy to know and learn more about others cultures

-At first I feel like we are completely strangers and then I get used to that person, yet I make sure that I explain any new cultural concept of mine and ask about theirs as well.

-feel somehow confused

-So stressful it is not that easy..

-Eagerness to know and understand everything about them and their culture

-Enjoyable.

-Nothing.

-Very interested to inform about our culture.

-Happy especially with application azzar.

-I feel like I don't know anything about English and I'm still in the zero stage

-Honestly i wouldn't feel as comfortable as i would feel communicating with someone who shares the same culture with me. But it is still an enjoyable experience to talk to people from different cultures, get to speak in their language and be understood.

-Having difficulty in interacting.

-I feel that we sharing and representing our different beliefs and special value also correcting some stereotypes about different societies.

This item seeks to investigate students' feeling when communicating with people from different cultures. Each of participants provided a statements from their personal experiences.

We can anticipate from the above statements that some students have positive attitudes towards

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the intercultural interaction, while others feel anxious due to the cultural differences and language barrier.

Item 19. Do you find any difficulties communicating with people from other countries/cultures?

Tableau 17:Students' Communication Difficulties with People from other Countries/ Cultures.

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Yes	15	50%
b. No	15	50%
Total	30	100%

Figure 6:Students' Communication Difficulties with People from other Countries/ Cultures.

As shown in the table above, (50%) of the students responded that they have difficulties in cross cultural interaction While the other (50%) claimed that they do not have any difficulties. We can conclude that the level of intercultural competence is the factor that determine whether or not students have difficulties when communicating with people from different cultural background.

If yes, what kind of difficulties

this sub-question aimed to find out about the major difficulties students face while interacting with people from different cultures. The difficulties that student provide are as follows :

- Mother language interference
- Language
- Not really ,but it takes time to get used to the culture
- Vocabulary, speaking

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- Stress and the lack of vocabularies make me feel shy to speak more
- Way of thinking. Religion
- Sometimes I can't find the right words to say
- Cultural Differences , Different Communication Styles /// Different Attitudes Toward Conflict...etc·
- Understanding them and conveying my messages effectively
- when it comes to cultural context sometimes i do not understand what they say

from the result above, we can deduce that the major obstacle is lack of language besides some psychological factors.

Item 20. Intercultural competence is the ability to understand cultures and use this understanding to communicate with people from other cultures successfully. In your view, do you think that developing this skill is important?

Tableau 18:The Importance of Intercultural Competence in Understanding and Communicating with Foreigners

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Yes	29	97%
b. No	1	3%
Total	30	100%

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The results above, shows that the majority of students (97%) asserted that intercultural competence is necessary to understand and communicate with native speakers. Whereas only a few (3%) answered that this skill is not necessary. In short, we can say that most of the students are aware of necessity of the intercultural competence in order to achieve effective cross cultural communication .

Item 21. Are you familiar with any cross-cultural programs to develop your intercultural competence through social media?

Tableau 19:Students' Familiarity with Cross-cultural Programs to Develop their Intercultural Competence through Social Media.

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Yes	12	40%
b. No	18	60%
Total	30	100%

As Shown in the date above, the percentage of (6%) of students claimed that they Are familiar with cross-cultural programs available online. On the other hand, (40%) stated that they are not familiar with any online cross-cultural programs. This demonstrates that the online cross-cultural programs are only common for students who are interested in learning other cultures.

Item 22. Which of the following tools do you use to develop your intercultural competence the most?

Tableau 20:Students' Most Used Tools for Developing Their Intercultural Competence.

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Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Blogs/ Vlogs	4	13%
b. Books and magazines	4	13%
c. Facebook	16	54%
d. Podcats	6	20%
e. Cross-cultural program	0	0%
Total	30	100%

the highest percentage (54%) of students asserted that they use facebook.

While (20%) declared that they use podcasts. the (13%) of students claimed that they use blogs and vlogs , while the rest (13%) said that they use books and magazines. No one among the students were familiar with the cross-cultural programs. According to these results, it can be deduced that facebook is the most used tool to develop intercultural competence since it is the most common social networking site among youth.

If others, please specify

this sup-question reveal the additional tools suggested students' use to develop their IC . students' suggestions are listed below :

- Books and stories
- easy to learn from it
- YouTube and instagram.
- Movies
- youtube and instagrams

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Item 23. Which of the following do you think is more effective for developing intercultural competence?

Tableau 21:The Most Effective Way to Develop Students’ Intercultural Competence.

Option	Respondents	Percentage
a. Using social media (as an independent learning tool)	26	87%
b. Traditional learning in the classroom	4	13%
Total	30	100%

As indicated in the table above, the highest percentage of students (87%) claimed that the use of social media is more effective to develop their intercultural competence. Whereas (13%) stated that the traditional learning is more effective.

Students’ justifications

1)For ‘Using social media (as an independent learning tool)

-It is very helpful and it is effective

-In social media we can interact with real people in real life situations

-Social media is a spread domain that shows what the traditional learning in classroom cannot show.

-Dealing with the target language native is more authentic and direct.

-classroom education is not enough for learning a language because it just provides a structural learning . in the other hand for social media it gives a cultural context when you talk with foreigners

-Classrooms atmosphere is limited since the teacher is not a native speaker of the target language, so the experience and the level of competence won't be the same

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-Because the time management is not sufficient we can study the culture we don't have enough time. Moreover, I prefer social media and audio-visual tools in learning because they are more interesting and not boring.

2)For ‘Traditional learning in the classroom’

-Relying on social media alone is not enough, as it contains a lot of distraction
-Well I believe that I would only waist time on social media that I will forget my target but it still better way if the student is motivated.

From these justifications, it can be concluded that most of students use social media because it helps them to interact with native speakers and also to learn more about target culture as a result they were able to their intercultural competence .

3.3.5 Discussion of the findings of Students’ Questionnaire

The data analysis obtained reveals that the majority of the participants are female. Moreover, the data demonstrates that most of participants rate learning English at university as somehow difficult to easy. As result, we can anticipate that the participants encounter some difficulties in their learning. Considering the use of social media all participants answered that they use these platforms. They also stated that they use various applications for different purposes. including social communication, news ,learning and entertainment. They also added that they use it for marketing and to promote their business.

Furthermore, all the participants acknowledged that using social media can be effective for English language learning. Accordingly, they claimed that these platform gave them the opportunity to communicate with native speakers which helped them to enhance their English. They also claimed that social media helped them to improve their learning skills. Moreover, the majority of the participants believe that focusing

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on the cultural knowledge along with linguistic knowledge can lead to an effective language learning. While some of them think that to achieve effective language learning they showed focus on the linguistic level, the remaining thinks that the language learning is effective when it focuses on cultural level. We might conclude from these different responses that each student has his own learning strategy.

Next, according to the data gathered most of the participants acknowledged that they are interested in learning target cultures, because they believe that it is essential component in language learning context. Additionally, a high percentage of participant asserted that learning the cultural aspects of target culture is important because they think it helps them to enrich their knowledge. Which serves to develop their cultural awareness. Besides that most of the participants affirmed that being familiar with the similarities and differences between their own culture and target culture serves also to develop is important to build cultural awareness and to avoid misunderstanding. Moreover, according to the responses of participants most of them use the social media platforms to interact with people from different cultural backgrounds.

Participants were asked to evaluate their awareness of the culture. Most of them answered that they have acceptable good level and few of them answered that they have poor level. Accordingly, not the participants stated that their knowledge about target increased through the online intercultural. Another question was provided to the participants about their feelings when communicating with native speakers which reveals that some students have positive attitude towards the intercultural communication. Furthermore, data reveals that half of the participants have difficulties wile interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds due to the

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lack of intercultural. On the other hand, the remaining students claimed that they do not have any difficulties.

The participants were asked about their view concerning the importance of intercultural competence in order to understand and communicate with foreigners. The results showed that most of them think this skill is important for them. In the same respect, the questionnaire aimed to investigate whether they are familiar with the cross-cultural programs to develop intercultural competence or not. As the finding reveals not all of them were familiar with such programs. Whereas, most of them they use Facebook to develop intercultural competence. Whereas, others said that they use podcast and the rest of the participants said they use books and magazines. Finally, most of participants claimed that social media platforms are more effective than the traditional learning. According to their response social media offered them various sources that helped them .

Conclusion

This chapter analyzed and discussed the finding gathered from students' questionnaire. As demonstrated below :

The findings show that students use social media platforms for variety of purposes. Additionally, the results reveal students' acknowledgment of the effectiveness of using social media to promote their language learning. Moreover, the findings show students' awareness of the importance of cultural knowledge for successful language learning, they also reveal that the students are aware of the intercultural competence as an important skill. On the other hand, the findings indicate that students rely on social media to interact with foreigners because they believe that it helps them to raise their intercultural awareness. Finally ,the findings reveal that students show positive attitude towards the use of these platform as learning tool to develop their intercultural competence. To conclude ,the results of this study confirmed the main research hypothesis and question .

General conclusion

This research aimed at investigating the students' attitudes towards the use of social media as learning tool to develop their intercultural competence. This research consists of three chapters ; the first two chapter are devoted to the theoretical part which presented the literature review of the variables Whereas the third chapter is devoted to the practical part of the study. Chapter one was about social media. First, it introduced social media and its types and history. Then it presented its importance in educational context and its significance as a tool to develop in intercultural competence.

Chapter two was about intercultural competence. Initially, it introduced the concept of culture and its elements , characteristics ,and its significance in order to provide an insight to the main component of the chapter two which is intercultural competence ,it started with its definition. After that it explained its components and its significance. Lastly, it presented the common models to develop intercultural competence. Finally, the third chapter was designed to analyze, discuss and draw conclusion about the data gathered from students' questionnaire .To sum up ,the finding of this research show that the main hypothesis and the research question were confirmed.

Recommendation

After the analysis of the findings from students' questionnaire ,we suggest the following recommendation :

For teachers :

- 1-Teachers are advised to raise students' intercultural awareness in order to be culturally competent using authentic materials
- 2-Teachers are recommended to design online exchange programs to promote their students intercultural competence

For students :

- 1-Students should raise their intercultural competence using blogs that provide information about culture such as traveling blogs .
- 2-Student are advised to raise their awareness of the differences and similarities between their own's and target culture
- 3-Students are advised to engage in cross cultural programs available online

For syllabus designer :

- 1-they should focus more on culture while designing a course .

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Appendices

A Questionnaire for EFL students at Biskra University

Dear student.

You are kindly requested to respond to this questionnaire which is a tool for gathering data for master dissertation about "the role of social media as an independent learning tool to develop EFL students' intercultural competence ". Your contribution will be of great help for the success of our research work. please tick the appropriate box(s) or make full statement(s) whenever needed.

Thank you for your time, effort and collaboration.

Section One: General Information

Q1: Would you specify your gender, please? *

Female

Male

Q2: Learning English at university was: *

Your choice

Your parents' choice

Someone's advice

Q3: How did you find learning at university? *

Easy

Somehow difficult

Difficult

Very difficult

Section Two: Social Media Usage

Q1: Do you use social media ? *

Yes

No

Q2: what kind of social media do you use? (You may choose more than one answer). *

Facebook

Instagram

Twitter

Whatsapp

All of them

If others, please specify *

Q3: How often do you use social media *

Always

Usually

Sometimes

Rarely

Q4: For what purpose(s) do you use social media? (You may choose more than one answer) *

Social communication

News

Learning

Entertainment

All of them

If others, please specify

Q5: Do you think that using social media is effective for English language learning? *

Yes

No

Justify your answer ,please

Q6: Can you specify some skills that social media have helped you to enhance? *

Section Three:Learners' Attitudes towards Developing Intercultural Communication Through Social Media

Q8: In your view, learning languages is more effective when it focuses on: *

- Linguistic knowledge(i.e, Grammar,vocabulary)
- cultural knowlege
- Both

Q9: Are you intrested in learning other cultures/target culture? *

- Yes
- No

Justify your answer, please

Q10: Do you think that learning the cultural aspects (costumes, values, beliefs, religion) of target culture is necessary? *

- Yes
- No

Justify your answer ,please

Q11: Do you think being familiar with similarities and diffrences between your own culture and target culture is necessary? *

- Yes
- No

Justify your answer, please

Q12: Do you use social media to interact with people from other cultures?

Yes

No

Q13: How do you evaluate your awareness about the English culture?

Poor

Acceptable

Good

Excellent

Q14: Did your knowledge about the foreign countries and their cultures increase through the online interaction?

Yes

No

Q15: How do you feel when you communicate with someone from a different culture?

Q16: Do you find any difficulties communicating with people from other countries/cultures?

Yes

No

If yes, what kind of difficulties?

Q17: Intercultural competence is the ability to understand cultures and use this understanding to communicate with people from other cultures successfully. In your view, do you think that developing this skill is important?

Yes

No

Q18: Are you familiar with any cross-cultural programs to develop your intercultural competence through social media?

Yes

No

21. Q19: Which of the following tools do you use to develop your intercultural competence the most?

Blogs and Vlogs

Books and Magzines

Facebook

Podcasts

cross-cultural programs

If others, please specify

Q21: Which of the following do you think is more effective for developing intercultural competence?

Using social media (as an independent learning tool)

The traditional learning in classroom

ملخص

أثرت وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي في السنوات الأخيرة على حياة الناس في عدة جوانب بما في ذلك التعليم وتعلم اللغة ، وبناءً على ذلك تحاول الدراسة الحالية التحقق من موقف الطلاب تجاه استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي كأداة تعليمية لتطوير كفاءتهم بين الثقافات. تم اعتماد المنهج النوعي كما أن أداة جمع البيانات المستخدمة هي استبيان طلاب لتحقيق الهدف من هذه الدراسة. تم اختيار طلاب ماجستير قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة محمد خيضر كمشاركين في هذه الدراسة وعلى ذلك ، أظهرت النتائج التي تم الحصول عليها أن الطلاب لديهم موقف إيجابي تجاه فعالية استخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي كأداة تعليمية لتطوير كفاءتهم بين الثقافات ، ونتيجة لذلك أكدت نتائج هذا البحث السؤال البحثي الرئيسي.