

An ICT-Based Approach to Teaching Civilisation to EFL Learners

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Abstract

The present paper, which is based on an experiment conducted with thirty-six third year undergraduate students majoring in EFL, proposes an approach to teaching civilisation to make it an important subject that enhances content and skills, both of which are necessary in the education of well-versed, thoughtful, and judicious students. In this method, small groups of students combine the use of various books and multimedia assets to investigate a given topic covering a specific time period and dealing with a major development in American history. Students are expected both to find a video clip or a film and to prepare an original PowerPoint presentation on the basis of predefined questions to explore the main themes and deal with key elements, such as events, facts, dates, terms, treaties, regulations, and people. Contrary to conventional approaches, this method, which partly depends on the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), can support a student-centred learning environment in which students become more active and self-motivated learners and critical thinkers of historical events and facts. Other anticipated secondary benefits from such a pedagogical endeavour in the American civilisation class are the promotion of students' reading, thinking, writing, and speaking skills, as well as the increase of their abilities to navigate the internet and master digital technologies.

Keywords: blended learning, ICT, language skills, student-centred learning, teaching civilisation

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Introduction

In recent decades, research in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning and teaching in higher education has provided a variety of concepts, methods, and findings that are of both theoretical interest and practical significance. Research has also provided a range of digital tools that can be exploited for developing teachers understanding of learning and teaching in particular contexts and for assessing and enhancing the student experience on specific courses and programmes.

The effective integration of new technologies into the learning/teaching process is currently much more challenging than providing computers and securing classroom connection to the internet. Finding the appropriate mode of integrating ICT into classroom practices is also one of the impediments twenty-first century teachers will face. In fact, the integration of digital technology is also associated with a shift from a teacher-expert to a student-centred approach of teaching and learning.

Given these facts, EFL teachers are in front of the imperative necessity to drop traditional ways of teaching and learning and adopt the active learning approach which has become the basics of education. However, so that the active learning method can be successfully implanted in the Algerian context, there need to be changes in both university instructional materials and in teachers' and students' perceptions of teaching and learning.

During the last decade, the Algerian higher education authorities have progressively implemented the License- Master- Doctorate (LMD) system in its higher educational system. They expected university teachers to combine modern teaching methods and learning approaches with the use of new technologies to meet with the local reforms in higher education. Algerian educators believe that the diffusion and use of ICTs would make language classes more vivid, enjoyable, and attractive to both teachers and students. They also think that the reliance on new learning approaches would endow students with new skills required for the 21st century labour market such as the ability to inquire, discover, investigate, and interpret facts.

However, while teachers and students in the developed world are in an advanced stage in the use of digital tools and resources in their modern language classrooms, in Algerian universities, the use of ICT is still limited. Moreover, in developed nations there is a shift from a teacher-centered to a student-centered setting, where teachers become collaborators instead of dispensers of knowledge; and where students become actively involved in their own education instead of passively receiving learning. Most of language learners in Algerian universities, however, still study in traditional classrooms at particular times to passively listen to their teachers lecture in front of large classes.

Relying on a literature review of previous research on ICT and the teaching of language, this paper draws on the changing conceptions in language teaching and learning and rapid technological advances to describe an experimental approach to teaching American civilisation. The method integrates some technological tools and focuses on active learning in order to advance the learning process and thus raise the quality of the language teaching experience in the department of English at Guelma University in Algeria.

This work provides an overview on the unprecedented growth and tremendous use of these new digital tools in language teaching and learning. It also examines the benefits and advantages these technologies and their applications in the language classroom offer to educators and learners. The aim is to show how these new forms of digital technology led to the redefinition of the meaning of literacy in the digital 21st century world, and enabled teachers to propel the reach

of their classrooms and immersed their learners into an environment of authentic language use where they can develop their skills to communicate, collaborate and take part in activities.

Overview of the Use of ICT in FL Teaching and Learning

Nowadays, most of the foreign language learning environments throughout the world are supported by ‘digital technology’ or ‘information and communication technology’. The former term is commonly employed in the United States and the latter is generally used in the United Kingdom. The abbreviation ICT has been adopted and used by everyone in education circles. The term ICT broadly encompasses technologies such as radio, television, DVD, fixed and mobile telephones, satellite system, computer and network hardware and software; as well as the equipment and services connected with these technologies, such as video conferencing and electronic mail (Tinio, 2002).

The widespread adoption of ICT in education stems from the firm belief that the integration and use of ICT in the teaching and learning process can positively enhance and modernize educational systems and methods of learning (Pearson & Somekh, 2006). Educators also commonly perceive that the widespread use of ICT by current students, known as the digital generation, can have a positive effect on the complete learning process.

In the field of EFL, Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) became the specific term in foreign language teaching and learning. CALL has been defined by Levy (1997) as “the search for and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning” (p. 1). At first, CALL referred to the use of computers by language learners, a process that started to materialize in the 1980s (Davies et al., 2013). CALL has however encompassed broader uses of new technology in language learning.

Other expressions of this hyphenated description have been put forward to illustrate different roles for computer technology in the language-learning process: ‘computer-based language learning’, ‘computer-enhanced language learning’, ‘technology-enhanced language learning’, and ‘technology-based learning’. The latter has been broadly defined as the learning of content via electronic tools, including the internet, intranets, satellite broadcasts, audio and video tape, video and audio conferencing, internet conferencing, chat rooms, e-bulletin boards, webcasts, and computer-based instruction.

In recent years, technology-based learning (TBL) has come to encompass the concept of blended learning which involves combinations of technology-based resources (i.e., e-learning and m-learning resources), face-to-face lessons, and other traditional materials (e.g., print materials). Other recent concepts of learning and teaching through the use of digital technology include ‘web-learning’, e-learning’, ‘m-learning’, ‘virtual-learning’, and ‘distance-learning’, ICT-enabled learning’, and ‘online or digital training’ (Macaro et al., 2012).

Digital Tools and Resources Currently Used in Language Learning

Nowadays, digital technology-based learning uses a series of delivery methods and hardware and software tools to manage and deliver learning content and manage and track learner progress, as well as learner-to-learner and learner-to-instructor communication. In view of that, it is useful to provide a description of the range of technologies that are now regularly used in foreign language classrooms throughout the world.

W.D. Haddad and A. Draxier (2002) showed that teachers-in countries where digital media is used often have easy and fast access to the use of updated and genuine materials in the language taught, such as audio/video tapes, CD/DVDs, smart boards, or interactive whiteboards,

PowerPoint, Skype and video conferencing software. The latter is considered as a very resourceful way of inviting foreign lecturers into classrooms and for allowing students to work in partnership with each other at distance. In countries like Algeria, where English is taught as a foreign language, this can serve as a means for exposing students to native English speakers.

The prevalence and diversity of digital technologies has led teachers in developed countries to adopt Virtual Learning Environments (VLE). These ready-to-use e-learning platforms (e.g., Moodle) allow teachers to combine traditional resources with interactive practice activities. Teachers have their own spaces in these learning platforms, where they can supply the content of their courses, and post instruction and reference resources for the learners, and create blogs and forums for further discussion.

In addition to blended learning, which has become a common practice in all developed nations, other approaches to language study have recently emerged and include e-learning and distance learning. Blended learning is perceived as an additional element to the classroom, one that supports existing teaching practices while integrating them with new technologies. Blended learning combines many of the best elements of face-to-face teaching and allows greater variety and flexibility than a traditional classroom (Finn & Bucci, 2004). One of its major advantages over other modes of language study is that it gives learners more opportunities for useful study away from the classroom, and also provides a new role for the teacher in the learning classroom (Hartman, 2010). The teacher's new role changes from that of a lecturer to a facilitator who supervises and evaluates students' progress while allowing them to learn for themselves.

E-learning, which plays an important role in distance learning, provides teachers with access to resources, courses, tools, training programmes, online communities, and opportunities to collaborate with other educators around the world (Kante, 2002). It is defined as the delivery of learning through electronic means involving the use of a greater variety of equipment such as computers or other digital devices (e.g. mobile phone, iPads, or tablets) to provide training, educational or learning materials regardless of physical location, time of day or choice of digital reception and distribution device (Stockley, 2003).

M-learning, which has usually been regarded to be synonymous with the use of mobile phones, includes any sort of learning which is done on mobile and handled tools either in or outside the classroom (O'Malley et al. 2003). As such, m-learning has become the same as blended learning and it can be used in educational institutions which struggle to afford technology investments. As all learners carry their own mobile phones, Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) has also become in Western countries a useful option for integrating technologies into the learning process in schools or universities which do not possess an ICT policy (Alberta, 2012).

Opportunities and Benefits of Using Various Electronic Tools

There has been an immense growth of ICT throughout the world in the past two decades. This development is the result of the recognition of numerous studies that the use of information and communication technology as an instructional means can serve as a means for educational transformation, and can offer new opportunities for improving the quality and effectiveness of language teaching and learning (Volman and Van Eck, 2001). Moreover, changing notions of learning and non-stop technological innovations have led to continuous changes in language teaching and learning methods.

Numerous studies have been carried out to weigh up the educational impact of digital technology on teachers, students, and EFL classrooms (Becker, 2000; Tinio, 2002; Davis, 2006; Collins & Halverson, 2009). Most of these research studies gave tangible evidence that new

technologies can produce positive effect on learners' enjoyment and interest in learning. Becker (2000), for instance, advanced four main benefits for digital technology use in education: increased commitment to the learning task, increased independence and motivation for self-directed learning, enhanced self-esteem, and improved behavioural habits (pp. 5-17). ICT has become a fixture in many homes around the world, and its influence has pervaded into all facets of our lives, including educational settings. This trend has been acknowledged by many as the wave of the future in which language instruction will be conducted by new developments in computers, the internet, and mobile technologies (Davis, 2006).

In addition, knowledge resources and productive capabilities are available on an "anywhere, anytime" basis (Geddes, 2004), inside and outside the school. These capabilities have significant implications for the transformation of educational structures and practices (Collins and Halverson, 2009), and tremendous implications for the role that education, so transformed, can play in a society and economy where everyone has the potential to produce, collaborate on, and consume knowledge products.

In short, ICT has many potential roles to play in education in general and in foreign language learning in particular. It can provide basic ICT knowledge and skills to prepare students for professional life. It can be used as a teaching and learning tool in a wide range of subjects at different levels. It can have positive benefits for learning and learners in many areas such as motivation and skills, concentration, cognitive processing, independent learning, critical thinking, and teamwork (cooperation and collaboration).

Use of ICT by Algerian Educational Institutions

While many countries in Europe, North America, and Asia have devoted both effort and resources to the integration and promotion of ICT in the broader context of foreign-language teaching and learning (Balanskat et al., 2006), evidence gathered from Algerian universities revealed that the use of new digital technology in education is not yet deeply implanted in teaching practices (Hamdy 2007).

In light of the globally emerging knowledge and information society, the Algerian authorities have given emphasis to the development of ICT resources. In this logic, "The Algerian scientific system has benefited from most of the programmes devoted to ICTs by the government, including three major projects: the implementation of a 'technological infrastructure for communication and scientific and technical information', of a 'distance-learning infrastructure' comprising videoconference tools, and of a 'virtual library', targeting in priority social and human sciences" (Khelfaoui 2).

Many of the institutions of higher learning in Algeria, however, have not played an adequate role to equip their institutions or support their language teaching staff and their language learners in the meaningful use of ICT. Consequently, higher education in Algeria is still struggling with the challenges of receiving adequate ICT infrastructure and electronic or mobile tools. A majority of Algerian teachers are also still hesitant to change their teaching practices to fit these new digital literacies, despite the ability of their students to use them effectively.

In Western countries, foreign language teachers never solely relied on the written word, but now also have access to film, TV, tapes, videos, official papers, power point presentations, and access to online libraries throughout the world via the internet. The key factor-for foreign language teachers-is to exploit the many possibilities that ICTs provide to foreign language teaching and learning. However, despite the availability of a modest amount of material for teachers' use through digital technology, and despite the fact that research studies have revealed

that ICTs are an effective means for widening educational accomplishment, most language teachers in Algerian universities, for one reason or another, do not regularly use these technologies as an instructional delivery system.

Civilisation and the Teaching of EFL in Algerian Universities

In Algeria, the content of American or British civilisation courses taught in the departments of English often focus on history or government instead of conventional views of everyday life and popular culture. This has led to a limited understanding of the Anglophone culture of the United States or Britain. However, regardless of its content, the civilisation course, if well-exploited, can serve as a vehicle for teaching and learning critical analysis, culture, and history. Accordingly, students can develop an awareness of the United States and Britain as richly varied and refined civilisations. The civilisation course can be used to address a variety of pedagogical issues, such as historical information, academic discussion, critical thinking and analysis, reading or listening comprehension, and vocabulary development. In essence, civilisation can function as an effective agent for English language learning and academic preparation.

The American or British Civilisation is a required course for all EFL undergraduate students in almost all of the departments of English in Algeria during their three years of studies towards a bachelor's degree, and also during an additional two years leading to a Master's degree. It has been usually taught in a conventional manner, that is teachers are required to give classroom lectures. In this traditional setting, lecturers usually face the monotony of ever-repeating the same lectures which could easily turn into superficial talk, and students frequently complain about the boredom of being exposed to tiresome lectures. Besides, when course materials and digital tools are lacking or nonexistent, teachers can barely benefit their students with their teaching experiences as they ought to, and inevitably become exhausted and indifferent. And so will become their students, who then will view the course as an undesirable must. The end result is that our departments face situations where teachers dislike teaching and students hate learning.

Teaching Civilisation with Digital Technology: A Literature Review

The multimedia assisted learning environment, which is greatly based on the use of the new technologies, involves various activities such as interactivity, entertainment, investigation, communication, knowledge and active learning. Multimedia typically refers to the presentation of material in two forms: auditory/verbal and visual/pictorial (Mayer, 2001). Both strategies include PowerPoint (Mayer & Johnson, 2008). In such learning settings, students go through a process of interactivity, involvement and motivation in their learning (Clark, 1994).

It is also argued that, currently, there is no place in the teaching career for teachers who are not able to use the new technology in their classes. A prominent advocate of multimedia in education predicts that "in the future, there will be two sorts of teachers, the IT literate, and the retired" (Cochrane, 1995). In the words of Charles Clarke: "our extensive and continuing research shows that learners who use ICT in the classroom get better results than those who don't" (p. 2). Similarly, it is posited that the "regular use of multimedia across different curriculum subjects can have a beneficial motivational influence on students' learning" (Cox, 1997).

The use of multimedia in history or civilisation classes is not a magic instrument in itself (Cuban, 1986). However, the propensity of students and teachers to use technology, their skills, and beliefs about using it properly in classes can be beneficial for both; and can help enhance teaching and learning. Besides, civilisation teachers do not anymore depend exclusively on

written documents, but also on other materials available for use through ICT such as “TV, newspapers, tapes, primary sources, and access to digital libraries throughout the world via the web” (Fisher, 2004).

The empirical findings of research on the effectiveness of videos implanted in multimedia classes are very encouraging. For instance, it has been reported by many research studies that teachers who use the video as a teaching aid in the classroom offered many benefits. Their students retain more, become more interested, and improve their reading and literacy skills (Moreno and Valdez, 2007). If effectively used, videos can successfully convey information to learners, in particular if students are assigned tasks to carry out while or after watching which will help them engage with the video content.

Another new innovation, being brought into the classroom to help students learn more efficiently for some time now and continues to be used heavily, is the PowerPoint programme. It is a very powerful and flexible teaching and learning support tool and a technology that enables teachers to present lectures in a more dynamic way than simply lecturing and writing on the blackboard (Brock & Joglekar, 2011).

Another way to use PowerPoint in educational settings is to have the students create their own presentations, and use them effectively to enhance their overall comprehension because PowerPoint presentations have a focal point, and command the students’ attention (Jones, 2003). In short, using the PowerPoint is an effective way to teach students how to use visual aids while working on their presentation, and to develop their public speaking abilities. Accordingly, the most important factor for civilisation teachers and their students is to take advantage of the many possibilities that multimedia learning offer to enhance the teaching and learning of civilisation and make it more relevant to the needs of today’s students.

Statement of the Problem

The subject of civilisation has evolved in many ways over the past century. New theories, methodologies, and approaches have changed the dispensing of this course in ways that would have surprised previous teachers. However, in many ways, the teaching of civilisation in Algerian universities still depends on traditional methods. The book, the document, and the article remain the main tools for civilisation teachers in their research, and the teacher-expert approach, characterised by the widespread use of traditional methods such as formal lectures and hand-outs, prevail in their teaching activities as well. It should be of no surprise, therefore, that Algerian EFL university educators have been slow to recognize the value of non-traditional instructional tools and modern teaching methods in the teaching of civilisation. In many Algerian universities, civilisation is a subject under constant strain. It is a failing subject and many question its significance in actual syllabi. What can be done about this situation?

A Potential Remedy

To address these problems, an ICT, web-based, and multimedia teaching approach has been put into practice in the civilisation course. The essence of this approach is to make students actively participate in a process of learning in which they have to manipulate the latest information technology as a medium for the learning of civilisation. The benefits of such an approach manifest themselves in several aspects.

Firstly, the use of technologies helps both teachers and students increase the quality of education and meet the requirements set by the contemporary knowledge society. Secondly, the web-based, multimedia way of instruction combined with the teaching and learning method,

known as student-centred learning; solves the problem of repetitive and monotonous lecturing featured by the traditional teacher-centred classroom teaching which dominated classrooms in Algeria in previous decades. Thirdly, this teaching method is not costly because it only needs classrooms that are equipped with a computer and an LCD projector device with a white screen. And finally, the greatest strength of ICT instruction lies in the fact that it does not only facilitate the acquaintance of students to active learning but enables them as well to develop their different language skills, and become experts in online technologies.

The Theoretical Approach to the Experiment

The benefits of the suggested approach are drawn from the perspectives of many authors who ascertain that the use of ICT in the learning of EFL in a student-centred learning environment can make learning more active, authentic and cooperative and can render students self-motivated learners and critical thinkers of historical events and facts. Moreover, it is also assumed that effective teachers and students are those who draw on the most advanced technology and communication tools available to them.

Hence, the method adopts the concept of ‘active learning’, also known as ‘the student-centred approach’, which refers to the technique in which students do more than simply listen to a lecture (Bonwell & Elison, 1991). In this regard, several techniques supporting active learning, in particular in civilisation lessons, have been verified to positively affect students’ attitudes and achievements.

Many researchers in the field of education support the view that a student-centred approach has positive consequences on learning. Darling (1994), for instance, argues that the student-centred approach promotes class participation, allows students to become more open, more efficient at making decisions on their own, and also recognises that interaction between teacher and student are natural, therefore breaking the psychological barrier whereby students see their teachers as experts (p. 116).

In order to be actively involved, students must take part in thinking activities, such as investigation, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Many studies revealed that there are various factors and conditions associated with the multimedia assisted active learning environment and these include enjoyment, focused attention, engagement and time distortion, associated with the notion of flow (Novak et al., 2000) which is a psychological state, in which a learner feels cognitively efficient, motivated and happy (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996).

The experiment also draws on the theory of CLIL, which is an approach where learners gain knowledge and understanding of the curricula subject while simultaneously learning and using the target language (Coyle, 2007). Content-based instruction (CBI) is also a major force in English as a Foreign Language pedagogy today, with the rationale for CBI resting on the notion that integrating language and content has pedagogic value, as the use of meaningful language will motivate students and enable content learning along with language learning (Davison & Williams, 2001). As Stoller (2004) points out, the common rationale for adopting instructional approaches that include both content and language objectives is the notion that CBI “provides a means for students to continue their academic development while also improving their language proficiency” (p. 262).

Methodology

In this experimental method of teaching the American or British civilisation course, thirty-six third year Licence students were divided into fourteen small groups, eight groups of three

students each, and six groups of two students to explore a given major era in American history. Each group was given a research notes' hand-out containing guidelines, objectives, and questions about key elements of the suggested period, such as names of Presidents and Congressmen, battles and treaties, laws and court decisions, events and important dates, and key terms. Then, after thorough research, students gathered these facts together into one story, prepared an original PowerPoint presentation, and found an appropriate video clip in the Web that provided an authentic context about key elements of the selected topic. In this learner-centred method the teacher assumed the role of a coach, a counsellor, a delegator, and a facilitator. In short, teacher and students had to evaluate learning together.

Materials Needed

Students were provided with documents covering their topics to be used as a starting point in their research. Commonly, this is a chapter divided into three or more sections, taken from a textbook dealing with the history of the United States or Britain. They were also required to go to the library, and to use the internet for further research in order to collect more reading materials, maps, pictures and videos. They were also provided with a laptop and a LCD projector with speakers to be used the day of the presentation, despite the fact that most students are equipped with a personal computer.

The Main Objectives

The main objectives of this method, which is based on the use of audio/video media, are to enable EFL learners to:

- Investigate a given topic in depth;
- Identify and put together key facts, events and people in a well-planned framework;
- Assimilate the content according to their specific needs;
- Become an active participant in the acquisition of knowledge;
- Integrate language and skills, and receptive and productive skills;
- Base their lessons often on reading texts, writing passages, speaking or listening abilities.
- Master new technologies

Method Procedure

As a first step to this experimental teaching process, several workshops were organised in the computers' lab where students were assisted to learn the basics of conducting systematic research on the web. They were also guided to gain knowledge of the correct manipulation of the PowerPoint system to enable them create presentations with good design, content and delivery. Then, using different sources, a PowerPoint presentation was developed by the teacher and his students, and a video was selected from the internet. This step provided a model of the product the students were expected to produce. As a next move, the teacher presented the first PowerPoint presentation and the students in the classroom took notes to fill in a listening notes' form with key facts from the presentation. Ultimately, each student used his notes to write an individual extended paper.

The second step started after the distribution of topics on the different groups of students. Each group was also provided with a research notes' hand-out-a kind of a roadmap containing a set of general guidelines to be used as a basis for achieving the required presentation-to be further developed by reading the chapter provided by the teacher, looking for books in the library, and collecting other reading materials from the internet.

While searching the internet, students were also expected to collect pictures reflecting the mood of the period of American history described in that chapter to be included in the PowerPoint presentation, and to look also for an appropriate video on the topic to be projected as a backup to the presentation. In the final process of creating their PowerPoint presentation, the students coordinated with their teacher for the originality and quality of their work, and for feedback. Likewise, the teacher and students are required to view in advance the video material to be shown in class, to decide whether the video selected to depict the topic under study; did it concisely and efficiently.

The Presentation

At the beginning of each presentation, the teacher provided students with a listening notes' handout to be filled with required key notes. They were asked to be respectful when other students presented their work. The presenters stood up and spoke loudly. They listened to one another and helped each other, and often included all the required details. In doing so, they enabled their classmates to collect almost all the details needed to fill in the gaps in their listening notes' handout.

At the end of each presentation, students in the audience conducted a discussion by asking and answering questions. The presentations were assessed according to a rubric which took into account the extent to which the presenters included all the research notes, the quality of the slides, their oral skills, and their abilities to reply to questions raised by their classmates. Ultimately, students used the notes from the different listening notes' handouts as well as other sources and wrote extended essays, which they submitted as a booklet containing the totality of their essays for an eventual evaluation and feedback.

Data Collection Process

Data needed for this study were gathered through a questionnaire which is annexed at the end of this paper. Other data were collected from achievement scores of students' essays, which demonstrated students' benefits from this multimedia method. The questionnaire was developed to identify students' views on the use of multimedia, learning outcomes, difficulties, or provide suggestions related to this experimental approach to teaching the civilisation course.

After a literature review, a 14 item questionnaire was conceived. Statements in the questionnaire were categorised in two parts. The first 11 questions were prepared to evaluate students' opinions on the contribution of the use of digital tools and the active learning approach, whereas the remaining 3 questions were designed to assess their views both on the difficulties encountered, and the proposed suggestions or recommendations to improve this method. The students were asked to rate the first 11 items on a scale ranging from 0 to 5.

Preliminary Evaluation

Students' anonymous assessments of this experimental approach to teaching civilisation gathered at the end of the academic year revealed the following facts: for the first 11 items, 21 out of 36 students, or more than 58 percent of respondents, rated their answers as good. The

remaining 15 students, which account for more than 41 percent of the whole sample, rated the 11 items as very good.

According to the students' answers to the second three items, it appeared that the method confronted some barriers in terms of resources, and time constraints. Students admitted that the method is very beneficial but time-consuming. They complained about being overwhelmed by too much homework imposed by their different teachers to fulfil one of the requirements of the LMD system, namely individual work.

Findings and Discussion

Based on the result of the study, it appears that the students in the study group were largely satisfied with the method. Taken together, their answers revealed that the method:

- Enhanced their language skills;
- Caught their attention;
- Focused their concentration;
- Generated interest in class;
- Improved attitudes toward content and learning;
- Fostered deeper learning;
- Inspired and motivated them.

Furthermore, the majority of participants also declared that the approach enabled them to:

- Become more involved in technology and competent in navigating the web
- Become skilled in the essentials of the Microsoft PowerPoint system
- Become more interested in the subject of civilisation
- Become more active and critical thinkers of historical events and facts.

Difficulties Faced

In the context of the department of English at Guelma University, issues of large-size classes, instructional materials' limitations, and syllabi coverage proved to be potential causes that would hinder the implementation of the student-centred method. Moreover, as far as this teaching and learning method is concerned, essay evaluation and feedback turned to be practically impossible because of time constraints.

Conclusion

Evidence from this on-going experiment suggests that learning a foreign language can be assisted by multimedia when this use is supported by appropriate learning theories and careful adaptation of the curriculum. If used in a knowledgeable way, ICT can help promote civilisation to its significant place in today's curriculum. Moreover, the adoption of new teaching and learning approaches will certainly foster EFL students' talents, and produce future workers with adequate scientific knowledge, with sound professional skills, creativity, and discipline.

Further, the results were consistent with the reviewed literature. Most of the literature highlighted that the integration and use of new available technologies and their support with modern learning theories could help with teaching problems, sustain interest, and motivate both

teachers and learners. (Bonwell & Elison, 1991; Darling, 1994; Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; Novak et al., 2000; Davison & Williams, 2001; Coyle, 2007).

For the experimental method suggested in this paper to work, teachers and students must adhere in a process of sound and ongoing professional training in ICT. There must be also a dedication from educators, students, university managers and policymakers, and everyone involved in the educational process to see this transformed into a perceptible reality for all.

There must be renovation in teaching and learning at Algerian education institutions. As educators, we need to combine ICT with the student-centred learning approach to teach students the methods of self-learning, and provide them with new language skills so that they will be more active, cooperative, and creative, and be better equipped to face the challenges of the twenty-first century.

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Appendix

Evaluation Form (For students)

1-The objective of this form is to enable the student to give his opinion on the use of multimedia, learning outcomes, difficulties, or provide suggestions related to this experimental approach to teaching the civilisation course. Students are expected to be objective and honest in their answers.

NB: For your answers, just put a cross (X) in the appropriate square.

		Very low	Bad	Average	Good	Very good	Excellent
		0	1	2	3	4	5
1	How do you rate your participation in the accomplishment of the PowerPoint presentation?						
2	How do you evaluate your contribution in the team?						
3	How do you assess the material means available?						
4	How do you evaluate the pedagogical benefits of this teaching approach?						

5	How do you evaluate your appreciation of learning the civilisation course content through audio-visual materials?						
6	How do you evaluate the impact of this method on your language skills?						
7	How do you evaluate the impact of this method on your ICT skills?						
8	How do you assess working in a team?						
9	How do you assess your mastery of research in the internet?						
10	How do you evaluate the use of video as a medium for teaching and learning?						
11	How do you evaluate the contribution of ICT use and the active learning method to your knowledge?						

2-State any difficulty or barrier you may have faced during all the steps involved in the process of realising and presenting your PowerPoint presentation.

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3-What suggestions would you recommend to improve or make this teaching method more rewarding?

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3- What is the learning value of PowerPoint and video clips in the classroom?

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