

EFL Students' Perceptions and Attitudes towards ICT Integration in British Civilization Courses

تصورات ومواقف طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية حول إدماج تكنولوجيا الاعلام والاتصال
في دروس الحضارة البريطانية

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Abstract:

Making use of Information Communication Technologies (ICT) has become an inevitability to cope with modern teaching of British civilization courses to stimulate English as Foreign Language (EFL) students as well as to meet their needs and interests. The current research paper aims to investigate students' perceptions and attitudes towards the implementation of ICT in British civilization courses at the Algerian university as well as to explore the impacts of these digital resources in enhancing their achievements in EFL context. Thus, to obtain the required data, a survey research was conducted where a questionnaire was anonymously administered to the 2nd year LMD student at Mascara University. The results demonstrated that the integration of ICTs in civilization courses ameliorated students' learning and motivated them. Furthermore, they revealed a positive attitude towards its uses in these courses.

Keywords: EFL students, Perceptions, Attitudes, ICT, British Civilization.

ملخص:

لقد أضحى استخدام تكنولوجيا الاعلام والاتصال أمراً حتمياً للتعامل مع التدريس الحديث لدروس الحضارة البريطانية لتحفيز طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية وكذلك لتلبية احتياجاتهم واهتماماتهم. تهدف هذه الورقة البحثية إلى دراسة واستكشاف تصورات و مواقف طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية حول تنفيذ واستخدام تكنولوجيا الاعلام والاتصال في مقياس الحضارة البريطانية في الجامعة الجزائرية بالإضافة إلى استكشاف تأثيرات هذه الموارد الرقمية في تعزيز إنجازاتهم في سياق اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. وبالتالي، للحصول على البيانات المطلوبة، تم إجراء مسح باستخدام استبيان لعينة من طلاب السنة الثانية LMD بجامعة معسكر. وعليه فقد أظهرت النتائج أن دمج تكنولوجيا الاعلام والاتصال في مقياس الحضارة حسن تعلم الطلاب وحفزهم. بالإضافة الى ذلك، كشفوا عن موقف إيجابي تجاه استخداماته في هذه الدروس .
الكلمات المفتاحية: طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية , تصورات, مواقف , تكنولوجيا الاعلام والاتصال, مقياس الحضارة البريطانية.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In this new millennium era, teaching the foreign culture and civilization in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context has witnessed a giant revolution. As an agent of change, making use of ICT at the Algerian universities has turned out to be an inevitability to cope with the new aspects of modern education in the twenty first century. Teaching this subject to (EFL) learners has moved from traditional lecturing to the integration of technologies in its courses as in all the educational levels and disciplines which differ in the amounts of uses and share a common agreement on its integration as a double must. In view of that, McGinness considered that such implementation has an effective impact on the educational process¹. At this level, Garrett points out that the advent of the internet and the development of technological devices has fostered the affectivity of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) for language instructors and practitioners; especially; for the ones who are familiarized with it and have already manipulated and implemented it in their courses². Therefore, such developments and proliferation of technologies in association with computers could be valuable and accommodating for instructors and their students when they are implemented in the target culture and civilization lectures³.

In fact, the incorporation of technologies in British civilization courses is of paramount importance for both teachers and students. Yet, the feasibility of this process is preconditioned with many factors and circumstances which may create a particular perception among learners who are deemed to be the core of the educational process. Thus, taking their views and perceptions into account supply instructors with what is required to enhance the quality of teaching and to meet their needs and preferences as well.

Hence, this paper is an attempt to explore second year EFL students' perceptions and attitudes towards the implementation of ICT in teaching British civilization at the at the university of Mascara as well as to explore its impacts as an alternative device to enhance learners' achievements in this course.

In this respect, the following research questions are asked to achieve the research goals:

- How do second year EFL students at Mascara University perceive the integration of ICTs in British civilization courses?
- What attitudes do they show towards its implementation in British civilization courses?

¹ Carol McGinness, *From Thinking Skills to Thinking Classrooms: a Review and Evaluation of Approaches for Developing Pupils' Thinking* (London: Department for education and employment, 1999), 22.

² Nina Garrett, "Computer- Assisted Language Learning Trends and Issues Revisited: Integrating Innovation," *The Modern Language Journal Focus Issue*, 93 (2009):719-740.

³ Abdelhak Elagoune, "An ICT-Based Approach to Teaching Civilization to EFL Learners," *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ)* 6,1 (2015):185- 199.

³ Norelhouda Atamena & Hachemi Aboubou, "In the Wake of Globalization: Exploring the Teaching of English Civilization to Non-Native Speakers of English in the Digital Age," *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ), Special Issue on CALL*, 3 (2016):169-186.

Accordingly, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- The implementation of ICT in British civilization courses has constructed different perceptions among the second year EFL students at Mascara University.
- The EFL students develop a positive attitude towards the adequate use of ICT devices in British civilization courses.

2. Theoretical framework:

2.1 Defining ICT

ICT is an abbreviation term which covers a number of different devices and materials which are based on technology to direct different functions and processes such as communication, construction, distribution, storage and control of data¹. These technological instruments involve computing equipments, laptops, PC, World Wide Web, networks, TV, *radio*, mobile, cell phone, and electronic means of communications². Moreover, Blurton states a list of tools that ICTs could involve taking into accounts that they may result from the amalgamation of numerous parts and equipments that are based on technology such as:

Hardware, software, media, and delivery systems. Today, ICT in education encompasses a great range of rapidly evolving technologies such as desktop, notebook, and handheld computers; digital camera; local area networking; the internet and World Wide Web; CD- ROMs and DVDs; and applications such as word processors, spreadsheets, tutorials, simulations, electronic mail(email), digital libraries, computer-mediated conferencing, and virtual reality³.

At the level of teaching and learning processes, these devices involve internal as well as external components of computing and digital tools which provide a space for several systematic functions for the users with the assistance of the net where different works could be achieved.

2.2 The Integration of ICT in Teaching Civilization

In fact, prior to its integration in cultural courses for language students, ICT devices were instructed earlier in language teaching through computers. Accordingly, Brown asserted that *computers* are referred to as an initiation when talking about the integration of digital tools in teaching and learning a particular *language* perhaps this idea was constructed due to the wide spread uses of computers in several domains⁴. This assumption should also involve auditory as well as visual aids. Early attempts to integrate them go back to the fifties and the sixties of the last century through the establishment of laboratories where computers could be used effectively.

¹Blurton Craig, *New directions of ICT-use in education*, (1999), p. 2, accessed on March 10, 2022, <https://www.academia.edu/36107452/>

²Victoria L Tinio, *ICT in Education* (New York: ICT for Development, United Nations Development Programme Bureau for Development Policy, 2002), p. 4.

³Blurton, *New Directions of ICT-use in Education*, 2.

⁴Douglas Brown, *Teaching By Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy*. (NY: Longman, 2000), p.145.

A limited number of studies has been published on the teaching process of civilization courses in Algerian universities through the use of technologies where learners had benefited from them¹. In order to cope with modern teaching aspects, Elagoune² conducted an experimentation on the implementation of technologies in the civilization courses which are devoted to EFL learners where he found that an *ICT- based- method* could be the shelter for language teachers and students to enhance their practices in the target civilization courses mainly when talking about the history and culture of America as an example. Consequently, such shift fosters students' linguistic competencies as well as their critical thinking in interpreting facts. Besides, their level of motivation and self-development could be increased.

2.3 The Effectiveness of ICTs on Students' achievements

In fact, supports come from different studies which conclude that the use of *ICT* devices and *multimedia* in educational settings and throughout different disciplines are a praiseworthy and could have an effective impact on raising students' motivation and involvements³. In this respect, a noticeable difference could be observed on the students' achievements where non *ICT* users achieve less than peers who are engaged in its instructions and utilized its instruments⁴.

The integration of ICTs in the educational process could offer the required atmosphere for a learner-centeredness paradigm as asserted by Tinio⁵ since such technologies if only inserted adequately, the results would be satisfactory where:

- Learners become motivated.
- They help them to gain and expand their knowledge with ease.
- The teachers could improve their instructions and preparations.
- To help the students to engage and activate their learning where ICTs could be a pavement to activate their learning and a servant for a long time.
- ICT foster the exchange of ideas and cultures and overspread collaboration, partnership and team works in classrooms as well as outside them.

As far as civilization courses are concerned, it is asserted that ICTs are effective in the teaching and learning of the civilization that is introduced to EFL students⁶. Another support comes from Ladi⁷ who asserted in his eloquent article that technologies could provide learners as well as

¹ Elagoune, "An ICT-Based Approach," 185- 199.

¹ Atamena and Aboubou, "In the wake of globalization," 169-186.

² Elagoune, "An ICT-based approach," 185- 199.

³ Margaret J Cox, *The Effects of Information Technology on Students' Motivation: Final Report* (London: King's College, 1997), cited in Margaret J Cox & Gail Marshall, "effects of ICT: Do we know what we should know?" *Educ Inf Technol, Springer*, 12 (2007), 60.

⁴ Charles Clarke, *Foreword, Curriculum Online* (London: DFES, 2003), p.2.

⁵ Tinio, *ICT in Education*, 7-9.

⁶ Elagoune, "An ICT-Based Approach," 185- 199.

⁷ Toulgui Ladi, "Using Primary Sources: A Strategy to Promote the Teaching of Civilization to Algerian Students of English," *Arab World English Journal* 5, 4 (2014):55-63.

teachers with original resources that help them to understand better the cultural and historical facts that are introduced in civilization sessions.

3. Method

This investigation is based on one of the main research types that are categorized under the quantitative approach. It is based on a survey research that is conducted to examine and measure students' views and attitudes. This type of research aims to measure and testify the obtained data quantitatively and over generalize the findings through the chosen sample which covers a large number of participants¹. In respect to the current paper, Creswell asserts that surveys are opted when conducting studies aiming:

To describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of the population ... to describe trends about responses to questions and to test research questions or hypotheses. They also interpret the meaning of the data by relating results of the statistical test back to past research studies².

In regard to the core interest of this study, a sample survey is conducted in reference to a survey research and the simple random sampling that has been selected in this study. This type of survey covers a part from the whole, unlike the *Census* which involves the whole population³.

3.1 The Participants

Deciding upon which sample to select and whether it is representative or not are among the main decisions and challenges that researchers are encountering in respect to the research approach, types, and tools. Thus, identifying a sample which could represent the whole population means to ensure that the collected findings could be over generalized on the whole that could not be selected all due to different reasons such as timing, ease of access and expenditure⁴. Thus, a sample has been selected based on a simple random sampling. This latter is drawn from the equivalent probabilities that every single participant owns; having the same possibility to be chosen from the population⁵.

As far as the sample is concerned, 60 students out of 100 whose age between 19 to 21 years old were selected from the target population to participate in this research based on a randomly selected sample. The sample represents 60% from the target population. They were studying second year English language License at Mascara University during the academic year 2022-2021. Prior to the data collection phase, the participants received an explanation to get a clear picture about the subject of investigation. Then, they were asked to complete a questionnaire which was designed for

¹Louis Cohen, Lawrence Manion, and Keith Morrison, *Research Methods in Education* (Taylor & Francis e-library, 2005), 78.

² John W Creswell, *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research* (Boston: Pearson Education Inc, 2012), 376.

³ Donald Ary, Lucy C Jacobs, Chris Sorensen & Asghar Razavieh, *Introduction to Research in Education* (Canada: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, 2010), 373.

⁴ Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, *Research Methods*, 73.

⁵ Samy Tayie, *Research Methods and Writing Research Proposals* (Cairo: Center of Advancement of postgraduate Studies and Research in engineering-Cairo University, 2005), 35.

2nd year EFL learners at Mascara University.

3.2 Research Tools

To obtain the required data a questionnaire was anonymously administered to the 2nd year License LMD students at Mascara University. Such research instrument is considered as one of the main tools in research survey¹. Essentially, the questionnaire refers to a set of queries that are written to address the participants who are about to respond from the given options or to give their reactions about the subject matter when they are asked to mentioned². Meanwhile, it is regarded as one of the essential instruments to be opted to study the participants' views, attitudes, behaviors, and their reactions about a particular subject³. Therefore, it was opted in this study aiming to cover the research questions and aims to reveal students' opinions and attitudes about ICTs in British civilization courses.

In order to explore the effects of the implementation of ICT tools in British civilization courses, a questionnaire was designed to the students to investigate their perceptions and attitudes toward the use of technologies in such subject which hold historical and cultural contents. Therefore, to collect the required data, a questionnaire was administered to learners. It is composed of eleven questions, i.e. close ended as well as open ended questions which aim to elicit students' perception on the subject matter. These questions are alienated into three main sections; the first section (Q1→ Q3) aims to examine students' evaluation to their teachers' integration of ICT in British civilization courses. The second section (Q4 →Q8) is concerned with students' views and opinions on the feasibility of ICT in civilization courses, and the third section (Q9→Q11) to display their attitudes towards it.

4. Results

In the first and the second questions, the students were asked whether their teacher used to implement ICT or not in British civilization courses and to check its degree of uses.

Table 1. Students' confirmation on their teachers' uses of ICT in British civilization courses.

Yes	No
100%	00%

Table 2. The degree of ICTs' usage by civilization teachers according to students.

Usually	Often	Sometimes	Never
00%	40%	60%	00%

¹ Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, *Research methods*, 78.

¹ Marguerite G Lodico, Dean T Spaulding, & Katherine H Voegtler, *Methods in Educational Research: From Theory to Practice* (San Francisco: Jossey- Bass a Wiley imprint, 2006), 159.

² James D Brown, *Using Surveys in Language Programs* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 6.

³ Zoltan Dornyei, *Questionnaires in Second Language Research: Construction, Administration, and Processing* (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc, 2003), 8.

The results show that ICT is used by teachers in civilization courses but with limitation where most of learners (60%) answered that it was used sometimes.

For the third question, it aims to reveal the tools that are used in British civilization lessons according to their degree of uses.

Table.3: the arrangement of materials according to students' experiences with civilization teachers.

PowerPoint	Videos	Maps	Texts	Narrating events	Others
3	4	5	2	1	/

The students were asked to mention numbers from one to six according to what they have experienced in the classroom. The results show that narrating events and texts analysis are on the first positions whereas the ICT tools are on the third and the fourth arrangement. Other tools were not mentioned while maps are put as fifth choice to be used by the teachers.

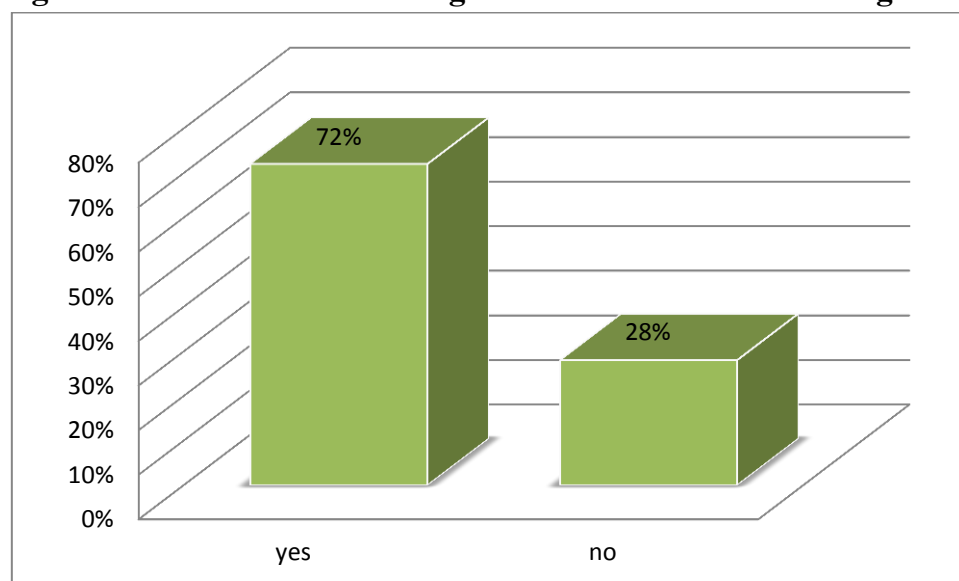
Additionally, in the fourth and the fifth questions, the students were asked if they had understood the British civilization lessons better through ICT tools. Then, they were asked to justify their response. The following figures illustrate the results of the fourth question as follow:

Table 4. Students' understanding in British civilization through ICT

Yes	No
72%	28%

As it is apparent from the table above and the bar-graph below, the results show that (72%) of the participants answered that they could understand British civilization better through ICT tools. However, 28% of them mentioned that they didn't.

Fig. 1. Students' understanding in British civilization through ICT



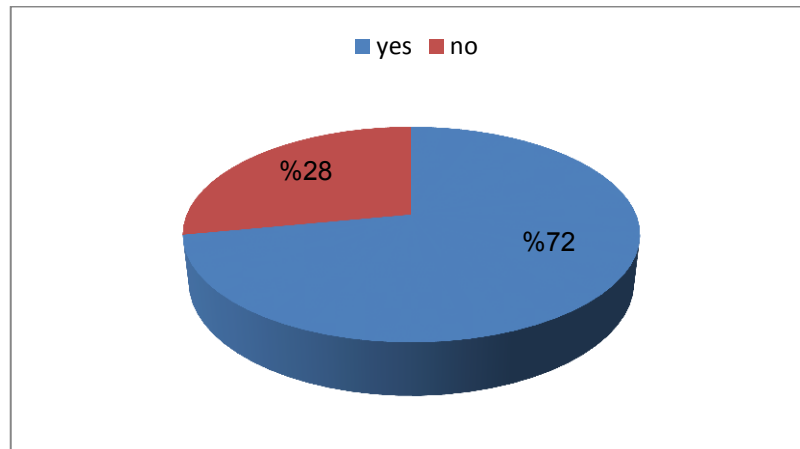
Then, the students were asked to give a rationalization in the fifth question. Most of the students who answered that they understand better when ICT tools are integrated, they claimed that ICT tools had enhanced their learning for this subject, increased their knowledge and motivated them by contrast when the lesson is taught without ICT, they lost their attention and become less excited to attend such historical subject. For those who answered negatively, their explanations fall into the same category where most of them claimed that the inadequate use of ICT is the main cause behind their response.

Moreover, the sixth and the seventh questions attempt to explore if the students used ICT outside the classroom to understand British civilization courses. After that, the participants were asked to mention the most crucial tools that they used to rely on in closed ended question which includes multiple choices. The two next figures illustrate better the following results.

Table 5. The use of ICT outside the classroom to understand British civilization

yes	No
72%	28%

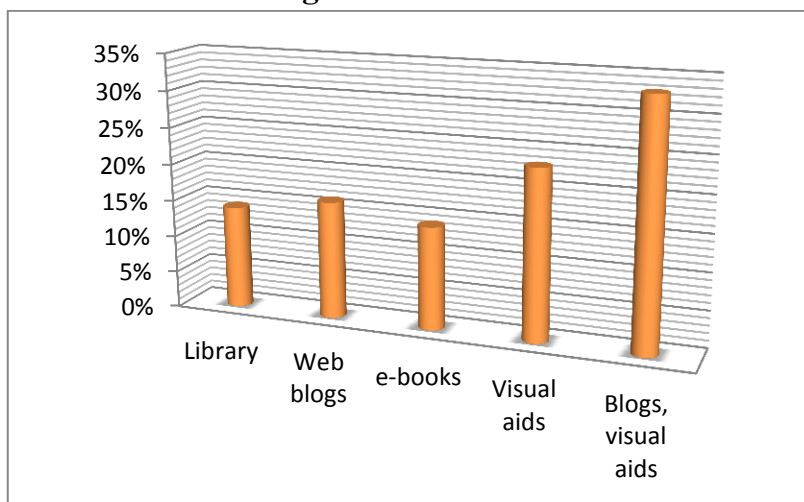
Fig.2. The use of ICT outside the classroom to understand British civilization



As it is mentioned above, (72%) of the participants claimed that they used ICT tools outside the classroom to understand different issues and lessons that are related to British civilization. However, (28%) of them declared that they didn't use any to enrich their understanding in this subject.

Table 6. The students' tools in understanding British civilization

Library	Web blogs	e-books	Visual aids	Blogs and visual aids
14%	16%	14%	23%	33%

Fig. 3. The students' tools in understanding British civilization

Based on the students' answers, the results reveal that (14%) of the students mentioned that they used the library to enrich their understanding in British civilization. Also, (14%) of them stated that they relied on e-books. Meanwhile, (16%) of them declared that they had used web blogs while (23%) mentioned that they had utilized visual aids. From the figure, it can also be noticed that (33%) of the participants asserted that they had used both of blogs and visual aids to extend their knowledge in British civilization.

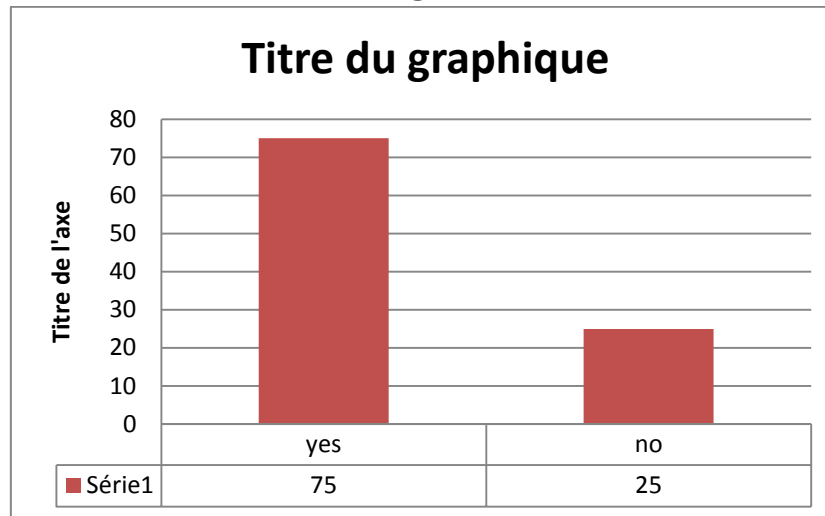
In addition, the eighth question was designed to bring out what most of students prefer to integrate in British civilization courses by the teacher. The majority of the participants agreed on two main answers where most of them mentioned that visual aids and blogs should be reconsidered and strongly integrated in civilization courses.

Furthermore, the ninth, the tenth and the eleventh questions were programmed to expose learners' attitudes and views about the integration of ICT in British civilization courses. The results obtained from the ninth question display that learners had revealed a positive attitude toward the use of ICT in British civilization courses. The following figure illustrates the participants' responses as follow:

Table 7. Students' views about ICT in motivating them in civilization courses

Yes	No
75%	25%

Fig. 4. Students' views about ICT in motivating them in civilization courses



Basically, the students were asked whether they feel more motivated and excited when ICT tools are implemented in British civilization lessons. As it is obvious on the chart above, (75%) of the participants claimed that they had felt more motivated and excited in British civilization lessons when ICT tools were employed in that subject. However, (25%) of the students declared that they did not feel motivated when ICT tools were utilized in British civilization lessons.

Then, the participants were asked to justify their responses in the tenth question. Those who declared that ICT tools motivated them more to enjoy British civilization, they asserted that ICT tools have the power to attract the students' attentions especially in a subject which carries both historical as well as cultural meanings. When ICT tools are employed, the learners will be more motivated and excited. However, those who mentioned that ICT tools did not motivate them; they clearly asserted that the main reason behind their answers is the mishandling of ICT tools by their teachers.

Next, the students were asked to give their points of view concerning the use of ICT in British civilization lessons in the eleventh question. The majority of the students show a positive impact on its integration on such narrative subjects. They also support the idea that ICT should be utilized carefully and adequately and to build a balance between the implementation and students' analysis for the contents being presented through these digital devices.

5. Discussion

As far as the current results are concerned, The students reveal that teachers' integrations of ICT is limited with a major focus on conventional resources and techniques in the presentation of civilization lectures where ICT are not prioritized by the instructors in comparison with traditional tasks that rely on texts analysis and narrative events . In this respect, Hamdy asserted that the implementation of technologies in higher academic institutions is still limited across different disciplines¹.

¹ Amr Hamdy, *Survey of ICT and education in Africa: Algeria country report*, (2007), 7, accessed on March 9,2022, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/>

Moreover, about 72% of students reveal that they understand better when ICT tools are integrated; they claimed that ICT tools had enhanced their learning for this subject, increased their knowledge and motivated them by contrast when the lesson is taught without ICT; they lost their attention and become less excited to attend such historical subject. Simultaneously, those who show a negative attitude link it with the inadequate uses of such technologies.

Furthermore, the students pointed out for their relying to such technologies outside classroom when preparing and studying topics related to this courses. Their focuses on digital resources indicate their interests and nature as digital natives or at least technology users whose preferences are tied with learning through technologies. From his side, Clark explained how effective and enjoyable could a lesson be when presented through visual aids which are considered as preference for learners¹.

Besides all, the main findings of the current work show that most of learners (75%) a positive attitude towards the uses of ICT in civilization by considering it as mediator that elevate their motivation and enthusiasm. The rest linked their negativity towards its misuses and inadequacy based on their experiences in classrooms. A supporting call from learners which elucidated their awareness and appreciation for ICT to make a balance between its implementation with an adequate use instead of a blind use leading to an ignorance of the content in respect to both teachers and learners' required roles.

In regard to these facts, Tinio claimed earlier that ICTs could play an effective role in raising students' motivation and help learners to expand their knowledge with ease when these devices are inserted appropriately and adequately². In the same vein, Elaggoune illustrated that ICTs could be the shelter for both teachers and learners to foster their achievement in courses that hold knowledge about the history and culture of the speakers of the target language by which English language was taken as an example³.

6. Conclusion

Evidence from this research paper elucidates that the implementation of ICT devices in civilization courses for EFL students become a double must to meet students' needs and interests. As far as this investigation is concerned, the students have shown different perceptions and views about the incorporation of technologies when being exposed to the target culture courses where British civilization lectures are put under investigation. The results demonstrated that ICT tools play a vital role in the teaching and learning processes of British civilization. Furthermore, the adequate implementations for technologies lead to an enhancement in knowledge acquisition for learners, and facilitate the presentation of the lessons. From another side, learners consider such incorporation as an elevator where their motivation could transfer from lower to upper stages providing that it is

¹Richard E Clark, "Media will never influence learning," *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 42, 2 (1994): 21-29.

²Tinio, *ICT in Education*, 7.

³Elaggoune, "An ICT-Based Approach," 185- 199.

appropriately and adequately inserted.

Hence, negotiating the placement of ICTs and their effectiveness from students' perceptions in the field of language classrooms, especially, when introducing the target culture and civilization to EFL students in the Algerian higher education is commendable and valuable to empower the classroom instructions and inform the instructors with what is needed to enhance the pedagogical practices in such courses.

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