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***Video-Based Collaboration and its Impact on Students’  
Cross-Cultural Competence Development: the case of  
Global Understanding Project***

*Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English as a partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the Degree of “Master” in Language Studies.*

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## **Statement of Originality**

I declare that this dissertation represents my own work and that it has not been previously included in another dissertation, or written by another person submitted for the qualification of any other degree or diploma of any university or other institution. I also certify that the present work contains no plagiarism, and it is the result of my quest, unless otherwise stated.

**Mr. Amir Sif Eddine BELHADI**

## **Dedication**

*To all those I love, brothers and sisters,  
and those of the future.*

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At the inception, I thank Allah the almighty for his help and his blessing to conduct this study, and upon the beginning of the process of writing this master's thesis and till the eventual day of completing this memorandum which seemed as real far from the end as notion. Nevertheless, it would not have been possible to succeed in writing this thesis without hard work and a significance contribution of many individuals to reach this final product as a reality.

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## **Abstract**

The present dissertation aims at studying the impact of video-based collaboration on students' cross-cultural competence development through the Global Understanding project, as a virtual cross-cultural programme named the Global Virtual Classroom (GVC) at the English Department in Tlemcen University. The main issue of this study is to know whether the cross-cultural programme helps students to develop their cross-cultural competence [covering awareness and sensitivity] toward different cultures. In order to investigate this matter, the researcher hypothesised that the majority of the GVC students' cross-cultural competence is positively affected by the cultural differences exchanged through the programme, as well as the collaboration between cross-cultural students can influence their communication if there is an enhancement of their cross-cultural competence through preparation of their awareness and sensitivity of the target culture. To examine these hypotheses, 16 questionnaires were given to GVC students to know their attitudes towards video conference. Additionally, the investigator managed classroom observation. After analysing the data collected quantitatively and qualitatively, the results indicate that the students' cross-cultural competence is improved during the GVC programme. Furthermore, the collaboration between the cross-cultural students affects their communication if there is impairment in their competence and not just an improvement.

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## **List of Acronyms**

<b>GUP</b>	Global Understanding Project
<b>GVC</b>	Global Virtual Classroom
<b>CCC</b>	Cross-Cultural Competence
<b>CCA</b>	Cross-Cultural Awareness
<b>CCS</b>	Cross-Cultural Sensitivity
<b>ECU</b>	East Carolina University
<b>IBM</b>	International Business Machines Corporation

# *General Introduction*

## **General Introduction**

People around the world are more judged interconnected than other things after the recent emersion and the boom of the technologies in the first decade of the 21st century. A world composed of divergent cultures and backgrounds [more than convergent] that enter into communication, which can be improved or impaired depending on how these cultures discussions. As such, the skills development becomes more required to establish a well multi-cultural communication without any clashes. Actually, cross-cultural [and/or intercultural] play a role in all sorts of communication due to the interconnectedness of the world, communication that can take many ways of connection, from the face-to-face real situation to the virtual interaction, but at the end, it leads and serves the same aim, which is the sharing of cultures through the world.

Nowadays, international exchanged programmes enable students to travel, learn and acquire knowledge and news ideas and thoughts [face-to-face as well as virtually] they give birth to a cultural diversity that presents advantages as well as challenges to the detriment of the one's own culture such as pragmatic failure and cultural misunderstandings. Divergences in values, beliefs, and behaviours became obvious in many ways through communication approaches, living norms, time managements, the way of working and collaborating. Cultural diversity emerges from differences and similarities, and could be managed through the development of competencies including awareness and sensitivity about one's own culture and those of others.

Virtual cultural exchange programmes which are fundamentally based on video-collaboration are planned to improve and promote students' competencies (awareness and sensibility) through others' culture knowledge via a cross-cultural approach experience. This experience adduces a chance to achieve a global understanding and awareness that are expected to be as one of the main competencies that students should be initiated and improve it.

The birth of cross-cultural exchange programmes that are mostly done in virtual centers is directly related to the fact that practically all students' knowledge about the others' culture is formed and stated through the media from the moment they do not have the opportunity to go and study abroad to experience these different cultures. In fact, these virtual programmes provide this opportunity to raise the cultural awareness and sensitivity, improve communication competencies, knowledge about different subjects, and enable students to have a deep look on various cultures, and make them conscious of the cultural differences. Such programmes develop into the students the curiosity and interest about one's own culture and others' culture, and enhance their competencies in communication via development of cultural awareness and sensitivity.

These exchange programmes expose students to other students and collaborators from different cultural and geographical setting, beliefs and linguistic background. Consequently, this cross-cultural exchange programme provides platforms to students that help them to learn without displacing. Thus, students reach a global understanding through sharing knowledge with collaborators who have different cultural affiliations. These programmes have a significant impact on students' behaviours, due to the help to develop positive competencies and attitudes [but, this does not mean that it cannot have deficiencies and impairments on their behaviours [due to clashes and misunderstanding between cultures]]. In the same sense, Matveev and Nelson (2004) note that focusing on cross-cultural training developed from examining and highlighting changeless differences between representatives of different cultures, to promote the development of mutual interest and appreciation of differences, and promoting collaboration methods to undervalue the negative effects and profits from the advantage of cultural differences.

In the actual study, the virtual exchange programme is called “Global Understanding Project” (GUP) based on Video-based Collaboration and Chat session. This course is mainly initiated by East Carolina University at North Carolina in United States of America. Nowadays, there are about forty international institutions taking a part in the GUP course from more than thirty countries around

the world. University of Tlemcen is also a participant as partner country. Students from these different universities experience about different cultural aspects by debating and arguing various subjects like college life, family, cultural traditions, meaning of life, stereotypes and prejudices. By the end they will perform collaboratively a report of what has been observed and learned during the links. Whereof, Students will share cultural knowledge with the aim to achieve a global awareness, with the same idea; Stager (2005) suggests that knowledge is better established if shared by collaborators in a social context.

In this respect, this qualitative and quantitative study aims at exploring whether this cross-cultural programme helps students to develop their cross-cultural competence [covering awareness and sensitivity] toward different cultures or not.

In an attempt to answer, two main questions were formulated in order to achieve trustworthy answers:

- Do cross cultural differences affect the student's cross-cultural competence?
- Does the collaboration between cross-cultural students influence their communication?

On the basis of the research questions, the following hypotheses were put forward:

- The majority of the GVC students' cross-cultural competence is positively affected by the cultural differences exchange through the programme.
- The collaboration between cross-cultural students can influence their communication if there is an enhancement of their cross-cultural competence through preparation of their sensitivity and awareness of the target culture

In a seek to work on this research problematic, a case study is implemented along with two research instruments, namely, Questionnaire and classroom observation about sixteen students of the Global Virtual Classroom (GVC) at the English Department at Tlemcen University in Algeria. The data collected will be

analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively, to get results and sufficient answers to the research problem.

In this sense, the current study is framed into two main chapters. The first one is a review of literature that will define key-concepts to this inquest. It will, further, highlight the importance of awareness, sensitivity and diversity that the Global Understanding Project promote. The second chapter is a case study which starts with a description of the setting, the GVC in which students' profile analysis is provided. Also, there is a brief description of research instrumentation used in this research. Then, data will be analysed and interpreted, followed by research conclusions.

*Chapter One*  
*Literature Review*



# Chapter One Literature Review

## Chapter One Literature Review

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## 1.1 Introduction

English is the international language used as means to exchange knowledge and communication, especially after the boom of technologies and ICT's through the Internet. Used as means at the level of economics, politics, and the most important one named education, it is also the other side of the coin, Culture, which influence all aspects of communication such as: attitudes, social relation, behaviors, individual/group feelings and the way the message is interpreted. Cross-cultural or intercultural communication is now a worldwide challenge [not just because of globalization that rules the nowadays world], in particular the barriers of distance that disappear by the use of both non-synchronous (electronic mails) and synchronous tools (audio-visual based conference) spread on the internet, this is a kind of collaboration that affluent communication and its issues, to erase misunderstanding and rise the cultural competence, the cross-cultural competence for a safe communication in all situations.

This chapter is a review of literature as introductory that defines the related concepts to this investigation which are as follows: 'Cross-Cultural Competence development', and analyse it in terms of observable behaviors, 'Cross-Cultural Competence', 'Cross-Cultural Awareness', 'Cross-Cultural Sensitivity'. This chapter also depicts the significance of Cultural diversity as well as the role of the Global Understanding Project in promoting students' competencies.

## 1.2 Key-Concepts

While talking about of all these concepts, which are only contents of thought, considered as abstract ideas, conceived, enlarged, sometimes even confused and sometimes contradicted, they can be separated from real situation, of the phenomenon, but, these Concepts are distinguished by the link between both the mental level and the observable one. Our key-concepts are defined below:

### 1.2.1 Definition of Culture

There is no talking about “Cross-cultural competence” without undertaking the concept of “Culture” which is abstract, this leads to trying to understand culture, culture can have an indefinite boundary, sometimes, what separates a culture from another is not really visible. These borderlines can, however, be crossed for various reasons, for example, in all forms of intercultural cooperation, tourism, trade, cross-cultural management and intercultural communication, of course the latter is the most important to this research in all these situations.

Culture is considered an amorphous concept even in the most rigorous theoretical discussions on cross-cultural competence. It is a symbolic system that includes issues of perception, cognition and understanding. Various researchers have attempted to define culture. Among the various definitions, the one that is provided by Samovar and Porter (1994):

culture refers to the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving.

Barnow suggests that culture is the inheritance that is expressed through behavior "a culture is a way of life of a group of people, configuring all patterns of more or less stereotyped behaviors that are transmitted from a generation to the other through means of language and imitation" (1973: 6).

It is very important that we distinguish between Cultures, that is represented by capital C, and the one represented by small c. Tomalin and Stempleski (1993) clarify that big ‘C’ culture or ‘achievement culture’ comprises history, geography, institutions, literature, art, and music. On the other hand, small ‘c’ culture or ‘behaviour culture’ has been broadened to include “culturally-influenced beliefs and perceptions, especially expressed through language, but also through cultural

behaviours that affect acceptability in the host community.” (Tomalin and Stempleski, 1993: 6).

Culture defines how people think, perceive, communicate, learn, teach and use technology. Most people are unaware of how cultures affect their behaviors and social attitudes. The best way to get into a culture is through total immersion, i.e., being part of its context and trying to develop its understanding while interacting with the natives of that culture, which explains the great importance of Intercultural exchange.

### **1.2.2 Culture and Communication**

The relationship among communication and culture is very tight and complex. At first, according to Hall (1959:169) “culture is communication and communication is culture”, cultures are the final products of communication; That is to say, communication is the medium and the attitude of human interaction through which cultural characteristics, whether customs, roles, rules, rituals, laws or other patterns, are generated and shared. It is not a proposition that individuals present themselves in order to create a culture in their actions in relationships, groups, organizations or societies, but rather cultures are a natural by-product of interactions and Social activities. In a sense, cultures are the residuals of social communication. Without the means of communication and communication itself, the preservation and transmission of cultural characteristics from one place to another would be impossible. It can be said; therefore, as Stajcic (2013) held that culture is created, shaped, transmitted and acquired through communication. The inverse is also true, i.e., communication practices are mainly created, shaped and transmitted by culture.

In order to comprehend these relational implications of communication-culture, it is fundamental to think in terms of continuous communication processes rather than a mere communication event. For example, when a group of people congregates for the first time, members have individual thoughts and behavioral patterns acquired from their own culture, previous communication experiences and

other cultures they have been involved in or interacted with. As individuals are involved into communication with other members of this new group, they begin to create and generate a set of shared experiences and ways of expressing them. If the group continues to interact, a set of distinctive stories, patterns and customs will evolve. Some of these cultural characteristics would be obvious and tangible, so that if a new person joined the group they would see cultural rules in which they would begin to conform to the group's communication. The new members exert an influence in turn on the culture of the group in an insignificant or sometimes eminent way, since they will be part of it. Reciprocally, this new shape of culture forms the communication practices of the current and future members of the group. This is true with all cultures; the culture forms communication and communication forms culture.

### **1.2.3 Cross-Cultural Communication**

Cross-cultural communication is a sphere that studies how people from differing cultural backgrounds communicate, essential to minimise issues that comes from misunderstandings that arise from cultural difference. Cross-cultural communication attempts to bring together such relatively unrelated areas as the cross cultural, cultural dimensions and the communication and its models.

#### **1.2.3.1 Cross Cultural**

Cross Cultural is the notion of the relation of different cultures through the comparisons of them, defined in the Merriam-Webster dictionary as how “dealing with or offering comparison between two or more different cultures or cultural areas”. It refers to the initiatives that increase the understanding of different groups, in order to develop effective communication to reach a safe behavior during in it.

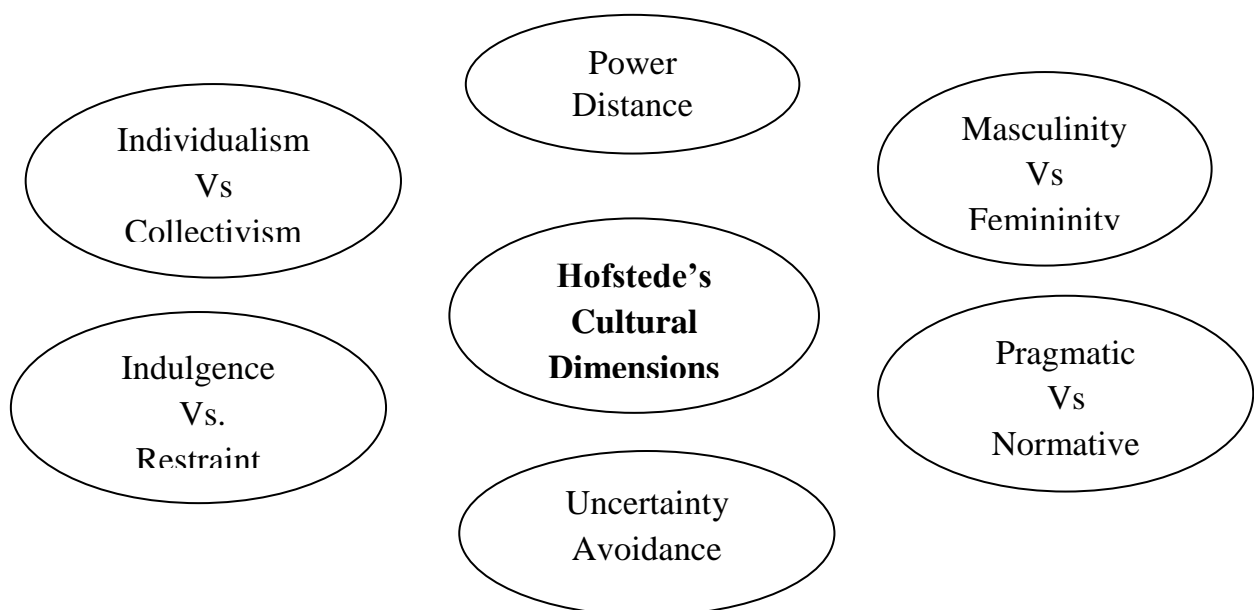
#### **1.2.3.2 Cultural Dimensions**

Among the most important theories taking a part of cultural dimensions, Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory is the most appropriate one. The development of the original model for cultural dimensions was between the 1960s

and 1970s to investigate the results of a survey that took a global dimension of employee values by IBM. One of the most aspects and particularities of this theory is that by examining the whole information collected, differences and variations between cultures could be pictured and quantified.

The Hofstede' theory on cultural dimensions is based on four dimensions of culture at the beginning; Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Individualism versus collectivism and Masculinity versus femininity. These dimensions were identified through the analysis of data collected from IBM employees around the world. lately a fifth and a sixth dimension have been added: Indulgence vs Restraint and Pragmatic vs Normative.

Hofstede argues that his framework “can serve to explain and understand observed similarities and differences between matched phenomena in different countries” (Hofstede, 1991:14).The differences between countries are, according to Hofstede, attributed to the national culture in those countries.



**Figure 1.1 Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions**

### 1.2.3.3 Cross Cultural Communication

Cross cultural communication, also known as intercultural communication [even if it is considered as a sub-field of it] is a concept base on behavioral skills, it

is defined as situated communication between individuals or groups of different languages and cultural origins. Basically, Cross-cultural communication is seen as a comparison and contrast between people or groups that have differences at the linguistic and cultural level. Communication is that active bridge established between individuals by mean of language, and cross cultural indicates this communication is between people of different cultures (Anderson, 1973) one must understand that culture is a well-structured expression of human behaviour within a specific political, linguistic, economic, institutional, and professional environment.

Cross cultural communication is used to describe, compare and eventually to determine a large range of communication issues that naturally appear within a partnership made up of individuals coming from different religious, social, ethnic, and educational backgrounds to solve. In this sense, it attempts to understand how people from different regions [and even continents] and cultures act, communicate, perceive and interact with the world around them.

Cross cultural communication focuses on social features, thoughts patterns, behaviours and customs. It establishes an attention toward cultures of different groups of people via understanding their languages, societies and customs. Therefore, cross cultural communication can be related to several other domains of study such as anthropology, psychology, cultural studies and linguistics. International business is also one of the areas that study it. Today, a great number of cross cultural courses and training sessions are offered to learners to help them develop their intercultural communication skills and make them successful cultural communicators. (Nancy and Adler: 02-03)

#### **1.2.4 Cross-Cultural Competence**

Cross-cultural competence also is recognised as intercultural or Cultural competence, or as cultural intelligence. Cross-cultural competence is being able to handle with cultural diversity that is reaching an important level. Cross-cultural competence is seen as a branch of so-called global competence putting the foundations for "global citizenship". With the progression of cultural diversity as an

outcome of globalization, intercultural competence (IC) which is to interact and to co-exist in multicultural environments is known as being very important. (Corder and U-Mackey, 2015)

After decades of research on cross-cultural competence, there is always a significant debate about its main components and its definition. Recent research shows a more behavioural definition, e.g. “Wilson, Ward, and Fischer (2013) define cross-cultural competence in terms of “culture-specific skills required to (a) function effectively within a new cultural context and/or (b) interact effectively with people from different cultural backgrounds.”” (Cited by Chiu et al, 2013). Hammer et al. (2003:422) define intercultural competence “as the ability to think and act in interculturally appropriate ways”.

Cross-cultural competence covers a broad domain of individual qualities and abilities considered crucial to the undertaken performance in new cultural settings. It is best described as a “set of cultural behaviors and attitudes integrated into the practice methods of a system, agency, or its professionals that enables them to work effectively in cross-cultural situations” (National Center for Cultural Competence, 2001:9). The Defense Language National Security Education Office (DLNSEO) formulation of Cross-cultural competence is similar:

[Cross-cultural competence is a] set of culture-general knowledge, skills, abilities, and attributes (KSAAAs) developed through education, training, and experience that provide the ability to operate effectively within any culturally complex environment. [It] is further augmented through the acquisition of cultural, linguistic, and regional proficiency and by the application in cross-cultural contexts.

Cross-cultural competence appears to be defined as either a list of attributes (traits, knowledge, attitudes, skills, behavior sets, etc.) of an individual or as the skill to interact in efficient manner with members of foreign cultures. Both are nearby to each other (list of attributes and being able to interact). It seems also that



possessing cultural competence means having the ability to learn from new situations and experiences.

#### **1.2.4.1 Cross-Cultural Sensitivity**

As a concept, Cross-cultural sensitivity is the quality of being aware and understands the deeper level of emotions that attach the person to his own culture and the way his culture may be perceived by others, and the acceptance of other cultures. A person who is not culturally sensitive is liable to ignore the differences among their culture and another person's, and as a consequence, the ignorance might affect their relationship and the manner they communicate with each other.

Cultural sensitivity does not mean that a person need only be aware of, and realise the differences to interact effectively with people from other cultures. It means "being aware that cultural differences and similarities exist and have an effect on values, learning and behavior" (Stafford, Bowman, Eking, Hanna & Lopoies-DeFede, 1997). The lack of cultural sensitivity owes much debt to the following factors:

- The ignorance of differences in thought patterns (logic system, deductive vs. inductive, analytic vs. global, implicit vs. explicit)
- The ignorance of differences in values, norms and beliefs (it shapes the behavior of the members of a culture)

#### **1.2.4.2 Cross-Cultural Awareness**

Cross-cultural Awareness, also as a concept, is defined by Tomalin and Stempleski (1993:5) as "the sensitivity to the impact of culturally induced behavior on language and communication". It induce observing, understanding and being conscious of similarities and differences between cultural groups, particularly the differences in attitudes and values. It is also as Adler (1991) held that is the basis of communication and it implicates the ability of standing back from ourselves and becoming aware of our cultural values, beliefs and perceptions.

Cultural awareness becomes a main when a person or a group has to interact with people from other cultures. Each people that have a specific culture perceive, interpret and consider things in different ways. What is considered as an appropriate behavior in a given culture is may be inappropriate in another one. Misunderstandings happen when the use of some meanings in one culture to make sense of the reality of another one. (Adler, 1991).

Misinterpretations occur primarily when there is a lack of awareness of the own behavioral rules and project them on others. In a lack of better knowledge we tend to undertake, instead of to discover what a behavior means to the person involved.

Adler (1998) presume that becoming aware of one's own culture (beliefs, tradition, principles behavior...) is a severe charge because of the culture is not something conscious to us. Since birth, learning by observation, and doing things on an unconscious level. Experiences, values and cultural background make it possible to see and do things in a certain way. Sometimes, the fact of being outside the cultural boundaries in order to realize the impact that one culture has on behavior. It is very helpful to gather feedback from foreigners on behaviors to obtain a lucid on cultural traits.

Supposed similarities could lead to misinterpretation. It is assumed that people from different cultural backgrounds are similar, there is a risk that they are not. Whenever there is projection of similarities where there are not, there is the risk of an inappropriately act. It is prudent to admit differences until similarities are undertaken as proof (Adler, 1998).

#### **a- Development of Cultural Awareness**

Cross-cultural Awareness is a competence that can be developed at both professional and social levels (individual or group). It can lead to make an overseas assignment, an international meeting or cross-cultural negotiation a successful one.

On the other hand, a lack of cross-cultural awareness can lead to significant miscommunication. Finally, rejection by host-culture colleagues or relationships.

This development is undertaken through steps from being unawareness, beginning awareness, conscious awareness, consolidated awareness, and transcendent awareness of the own and target culture (Christensen, 1989).

#### **1.2.4.3 Intercultural Effectiveness**

There is a predisposition to think that basic conviction and culture are as human temperament, or common sense, when in fact they are acquired and learned as a result of belonging to groups of people who have an influence. Studying, exchanging, living, working in foreign locations result in, the reflex is to interpret and understand local ways of being through one cultural reference. This interpretation can be misleading, and in some cases, train irredeemable impairment to relationships that success of projects rest on. The goal of cross-cultural effectiveness is to decrease risks of failure and extend both the individual's and the organization's chances of success in an international environment.

##### **a- The Cross-culturally Effective Person**

Simply stated, a cross-culturally effective person is someone who is able to intercommunicate, to live normally and work successfully in another culture. The cross-culturally effective person includes this five main attributes:

- (1) the ability to handle psychological stress,
- (2) the ability to effectively communicate,
- (3) the ability to establish interpersonal relationships,
- (4) the ability to have cross-cultural awareness,
- (5) the ability to have cultural empathy

(Han, 1997, 2008)

### **1.2.5 Models of Cross-Cultural Competence**

Dr. Milton Bennett developed a model of Cross-cultural Competence also called the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) in 1993; the structure demonstrates the different manners in which people can react to cultural differences.

Structured into six levels of increasing sensitivity to difference, the DMIS identify the underlying cognitive orientations used to understand cultural difference. By recognising the underlying experience of cultural difference, predictions about behavior and attitudes can be made to ease development along the continuum. The first three stages are ethnocentric because one considers one's own culture as the central to reality. Climbing the scale, one evolves a more and more ethnorelative stand point, meaning that one experiences one's own culture as in the context of other cultures. By the fourth stage, ethnocentric views are replaced by ethnorelative perspectives. (Bennett, 1993).

#### **1.2.5.1 Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity**

##### **1. Denial of Difference**

- Individuals experience their own culture as the only factual one. Other cultures are either not noticed at all or are understood in an undifferentiated, simplistic manner. People at this position are generally disinterested in cultural difference, but when confronted with difference their apparently a mild acceptance can change to an aggressive endeavor to avoid and eliminate it. Most of the time, this is a result of social and cultural isolation.

##### **2. Defense against Difference**

- The own culture is experienced as the evolved or the foremost way to live. This position is depicted by the dualistic "us/them" thinking and often occurs negative stereotyping.

**3. Minimization of Difference**

- The experience of similarity overtake the experience of difference. People admit a surface cultural differences in food, behaviors, customs, etc.,. But they underline that human similarity at the physical structure, psychological needs, and/or presumed their adherence to universal values. People at this stand are plausibly to assume that they are no longer ethnocentric, they overestimate their tolerance while undervalue the effect of their own culture.

**4. Acceptance of Difference**

- One's own culture is experienced as one of a number of others cultures. At this stand, people accept the existence of different cultures that organize human existence, despite of the fact that they it is not necessarily like or agree with every other culture. They can identify how culture affects human experience and they have a scheme for organizing observations of cultural difference. To recognize people from this level through their way they question others. This reflects a desire to be aware, and eliminate prejudices.

**5. Adaptation to Difference**

- Individuals are able to extend their own perspective to understand other cultures and behave with the diversity of cultural in an appropriate way. The effective use of empathy, to understand and be understood across cultural boundaries. It is the ability to act correctly with foreigners of one's own culture.

**6. Integration of Difference**

- One's experience of self is extended to embody the motion in and out of different cultural perspectives. People at this stand have a definition of self that is out of to any particular culture, enabling this individual to displace in a quietly from one cultural perspective to another.

(Bennett, 1993)

Cross' Cultural Competence Framework	
Cultural destructiveness	Destructive attitudes, policies, and practices towards diverse cultures and individuals within an organization.
Cultural incapacity	Extremely biased organization and individuals in the dominant group. Oppressive policies and stereotyping. Decisions and actions fear - based. Disproportionality in resource allocation, discriminatory hiring practices, subtle unwelcoming messages, lower expectations for culturally diverse.
Cultural blindness	Ethnocentrism in policies, practices, and attitudes. Philosophy: "I don't see color. We are all the same." Cultural knowledge lacking.
Cultural pre-competence	Proactive organization and individuals. Acceptance and respect for differences, cultural assessment, ongoing professional development, organizational adaptations
Advanced cultural competence	Culturally proficiency with integration of culture-based models and practices. Assertive and proactive agenda and programming.

**Table1.1** : Cross-cultural Competence Model. Adapted from Cross et al, 1988, 1989, and Ponterotto, 1988.

### 1.2.6 Video Based Collaboration

Video based collaboration, also called virtual collaboration or visual collaboration, is the method of collaboration base on telecommunication technologies between virtual team, students, researchers or companies, that locations are distanced by place and time, through a full motion video and audio,

Video based collaboration follows the same process as a simple collaboration, but the participants involved in it do not physically interact and communicate totally through technological channels. It involves the simulation of information transfer present in face-to-face assembly, communicating in a virtual manner through verbal, visual, written, and digital means, but technology has its own limits not only in sharing some types of information that prevent virtual collaboration from being as efficient as face-to-face interaction, but in its own boundaries of the technology itself.

### 1.2.7 Types of Video Based Collaboration

- **Synchronous:** Synchronous collaboration happens when partners are qualified to share knowledge and notions instantly.
- **Asynchronous:** it happens when partners communicate without the ability to directly reply to messages or and ideas.
- **Audio-conferencing:** it enables partners to communicate orally in real-time without the use video imagery.
- **Video-Conferencing:** it is communicating with the use of real-time of audio-visual information. Video-conferencing embodies updated visuals in instantly manner.
- **Computer-mediated communication:** it is defined as data received through computer without effective real-time audio-visual from partners.

### 1.3 Global Understanding Project

Global Understanding Project is a virtual online cultural collaboration designed to help graduates students [the US students] launched by East Carolina University (ECU) to develop an understanding and an appreciation of people from other cultures, issues and ideas within the global community. The course helps in developing students who are fully equipped to function adequately outside their

cultural comfort zone, through engaging them in cultural interaction twice a week for 1 hour with worldwide students from different universities including: Algeria, Turkey, USA, Brazil, Mexico, China, Malaysia, Portugal and Switzerland. Students have an opportunity to tackle subjects ranging from family, education, culture, life and faith, traditions, and stereotypes. Such interactions help them break cultural barriers and stereotypes, develop a fruitful cross cultural dialogue and cooperation, and enhance their communication and social skills along with cultural competence. (Cited in the official website of ECU).

#### **a- Mission and Objectives**

The project is aiming at building an intercultural and cross-cultural dialogue between youth on a global scale. It heads towards improving their intercultural and communicative competences and enhance their social and interaction skills which will help them to be more engaged in building a platform of collaboration between different cultures to break cultural barriers and stereotypes that may challenge peace building.

#### **1.3.1 Global Virtual Classroom**

Mouhadjer (2010) introduce the Global Virtual Classroom in the Department of English at the university of Tlemcen as a classroom where the Internet is used to connect between partners through different countries from different continent to have a real communicative situations through video conferencing, chat session and other social networks such as e-mails, social-network. For a successful link at the GVC there must be some equipment among of them a good internet bandwidth, camera, and one internet connected computer with a projector and ten personal computers. Among the goals of Global Virtual Classroom project is that it develops the intercultural and cross-cultural competence and to make students more flexible and culturally aware about their mother culture and the foreign cultures. It also helps the participants to have new partners and collaborators, and future friends from different cultures. They meet between 10 and 12 weeks per semester with



three or four universities, twice a week for 45 minutes each link. In fact, all links' discussions are done in the English language.

## **1.4 The Effectiveness of Video Based Collaboration through GUP**

The use of face to face communication ICT's can ease the collaboration as it is confirmed by the students (the case of GUP students at the level of the Tlemcen University). Consequently, the video based collaboration is judged as an essential tool that would prepare students to use and develop their skills of interaction and communication in real time, which also includes the ability to acquire knowledge about the end culture (Byram, 1997 *b*).

Thanks to the project, students are engaged in cross-cultural communication in a manner to develop it and help them to enhance their awareness and sensitivity beyond 'Prejudices and Stereotypes' that can lead to clashes and avoid them as a communication barrier with foreigners; all this to be able to look at the importance of being culturally competent.

### **1.4.1 Cultural Diversity**

Cultural diversity within students can produce communication benefits or issues. The outcome, positive or negative, depends on the student management of the diversity in the same group or within it for group benefit. According to Stahl, Maznevski, Voigt & Jonsen works and analysis about cultural diversity showed that cultural diversity can elevate the possibility of conflict happening from various perspectives on how communication is, or dissimilar preferences about students or more basic shocks about values. Persons as an individual with a diverse cultural background have different mindsets, values and in somehow beliefs that may negatively affect the students' performances. Also, their analysis shows that the communication of more different teamwork [here as students] can be less efficient

due to matters of time difference and geographical location (Stahl, G., Maznevski, M., Voigt, A., Jonsen, K., 2010)

Barinaga (2010) findings were double. First, she noticed how the group used its own culture as a social structure in discussions as a way to differentiate between team members to explain the unbalance within the group. In similar situations, it appeared easy to use cultural differences as an excuse, rather than taking it to more discussions. At a certain point the group could not come to a consensus on a certain issue or items, explaining this as caused by cultural diversity and different agreements. Second, cultural diversity was used to value the project, with the object of integrating the national-culture. Generalising is not possible from Barinaga's findings, but the study points that culture can also be regarded and used as a structure when things are unclear and confused in international group communication. This implies that, rather than discovering the source of the problem, the issue is related to a misinterpretation occurring from a cultural context (Barinaga, 2010), with culture as the suspect for the failure.

#### **1.4.2 Students' Cross-Cultural Competence Development**

Developing cross-cultural competence is a process which implies methods and procedures devoted to increase cross-cultural competence that leads to the adoption and understanding of the characteristics of one's own culture, and evolves a positive attitude toward other cultural groups and its participants, and expansions of the capacity to understand and interact with them.

### **1.5 The Impact of GUP**

There is an alternative position on which impact culture has on international projects. The higher the cultural involvement is within the team the more they consider it is important to assume cultural difference into account. Moreover, it is significant to reflect on the culture of the nation where projects are achieved.

## **1.6 Conclusion**

In this chapter, an overview about Culture, Communication, Cross-cultural communication as a first part taking into consideration works of previous scholars, while another review about the Global Understanding Project and Cross-cultural competence were the focus points of this case study to enlighten the importance that the programme play in feeding cross cultural competence of students participating at GVC programme to have a well prepared citizens to an effective cross culturally effective person.

The following chapter will describe the case study, the research instruments that are used by researchers, presenting the main findings drawn from each tool, their analysis and discussion, and after their interpretation in relation to the research questions and hypothesis formulated before.

*Chapter Two*  
*Data Analysis and*  
*Interpretation*

# Chapter Two Data Analysis and Interpretation

## Chapter Two Data Analysis and Interpretation

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## **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter handles the practical part of the study in an attempt to expose the impact of the collaboration on the students' competence, it represents the methodology used. It starts by describing the research setting, namely the GVC, research design and the sample. It also defines the research instruments that were used for collecting data (questionnaire and classroom observation). Finally, an analysis and interpretation of the data collected quantitatively and qualitatively. The chapter will end with conclusion of what the GUP brings.

## **2.2 Description of the Selected Setting**

The research was carried out in the Global Virtual Classroom (GVC) [lately defined in the first chapter] at the English Department at Tlemcen University. Mouhadjer (2010) explains that the GVC is a classroom where the internet is used to allow students from different countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas, to communicate in real situations through video conference, chat sessions and other social-networks such as e-mails, Face-book... etc.

## **2.3 Research Design**

The research methodology used in this research is “A Case Study”. Zaidah (2007) defined it as: “Case study method enables a researcher to closely examine the data within a specific context. In most cases, a case study method selects a small geographical area or a very limited number of individuals as the subjects of study”. Case study is considered as a useful research method which enables the researcher to collect and analyse the data through different research instruments such as: surveys, interviews, documentation review and observation. In this study, the instruments used are questionnaire and classroom observation.

## **2.4 The Sample**

The sample population is regarded as an essential part of any research. Mugo Fridah (2002:1) defines sampling as “A sample is a finite part of a statistical population whose properties are studied to gain information about the whole (Webster, 1985). When dealing with people, it can be defined as a set of respondents (people) selected from a larger population for the purpose of a survey”. The sample used in this study is the GVC’s members represented by students from different levels, groups, ages and genders; they are about 16 students.

### **2.4.1 Learner’s Profile**

The informants representing the sample are GVC members. They are about sixteen students (only fifteen who responded to the questionnaire). Their age is between 19 and 23. The main reason behind choosing this sample is that the learners have already experienced the video based collaboration.

## **2.5 Data Collection Instruments**

As it is mentioned previously, two different instruments are used to collect data, namely questionnaire and classroom observation.

### **2.5.1 Questionnaire**

Questionnaire is the most commonly research instrument used for collecting data. It consists of different types of questions which are: close-ended questions, open-ended questions and mixed questions. Brown (2001:6) defined the questionnaire as “any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answer or selecting from among existing answers”.

In the present study, the questionnaire was given to the GVC members. It consists of ten questions; the main goal behind this questionnaire is to investigate

the effects of video-based collaboration on students' cultural competence and communication.

The students' questionnaire is structured by using three kinds of questions namely:

### 1. Close-Ended Questions:

For example: How is the Video Conference discussion qualified by students?

Beneficial

Half-beneficial

Non-beneficial

### 2. Open-Ended Questions:

For example: How do you behave with people who have prejudices and stereotypes towards you?

### 3. Mixed-Questions:

For example: Does the Video Based Conference enable students to handle a successful communication?

Yes

No

Why?

.....

## 2.5.2 Classroom Observation

The second instrument used to collect data was "Classroom Observation". It is considered as a qualitative research strategy for gathering information from natural situations. In this context, L. Cohen (2007:396) said that "The distinctive feature of observation as a research process is that it offers an investigator the opportunity to gather 'live' data from naturally occurring social situations".



According to Umar (2013), there are two well-known kinds of classroom observation namely:

- 1) Participant / non-participant observation: the researcher can be a member who takes part in the observed situation or he can just observe the activity without interacting.
- 2) Structured / unstructured observation: the investigator can design a plan in advance to make his observation structured or he can just take notes about the observed situation.

In this study, particularly, the researcher used non-participant and unstructured observation during the whole sessions of the second session of spring 2017 with the GVC members.

## **2.6 Data Analysis**

It is claimed that data analysis is the most important chapter because it gives the results on which the investigator deduce conclusions and approve or disapprove his hypotheses. The researcher tried to present the data collected as well as analyse it through quantitative and qualitative methods.

- **Quantitative Data Analysis**

“The single most important feature of quantitative research is, naturally, that is centered around numbers” (Dornyei, 2007:32). Accordingly, quantitative data analysis is the convert of the data collected to numerical forms, and analysing it using statistics.

- **Qualitative Data Analysis**

Qualitative data analysis is the explanation, the understanding and the interpretation of situations and people under investigation. In this context, Cohen et al said: “Qualitative data analysis involves organizing, accounting for and

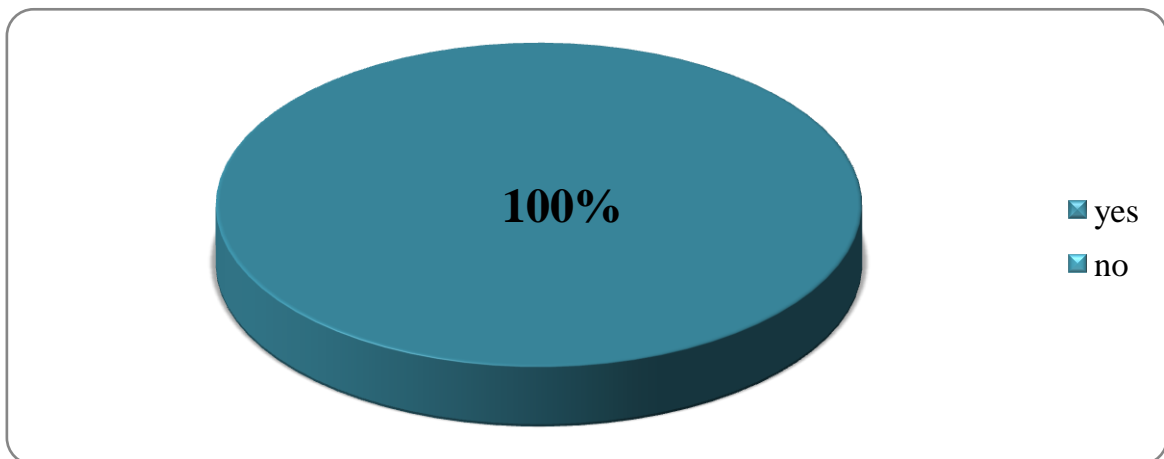
explaining the data; in short, making sense of data in terms of the participants' definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities". (Cohen et al, 2007: 461).

### 2.6.1 Learner's Questionnaire Analysis

This part is allocated to analyse the data collected from the questionnaire given to the GVC students. The main goal of this questionnaire is to know the impact of video based collaboration on students' cross-cultural competence development.

**Question 01:** does the video based conference enable students to handle a successful communication?

The aim of this question is to know if the video based conference enables the students to communicate successfully. All the students, that is, a ratio of 100% say yes. The following pie- chart illustrates the above information:



**Pie-chart 2.1: The Impact of Video Based Conference on Students' Communication**

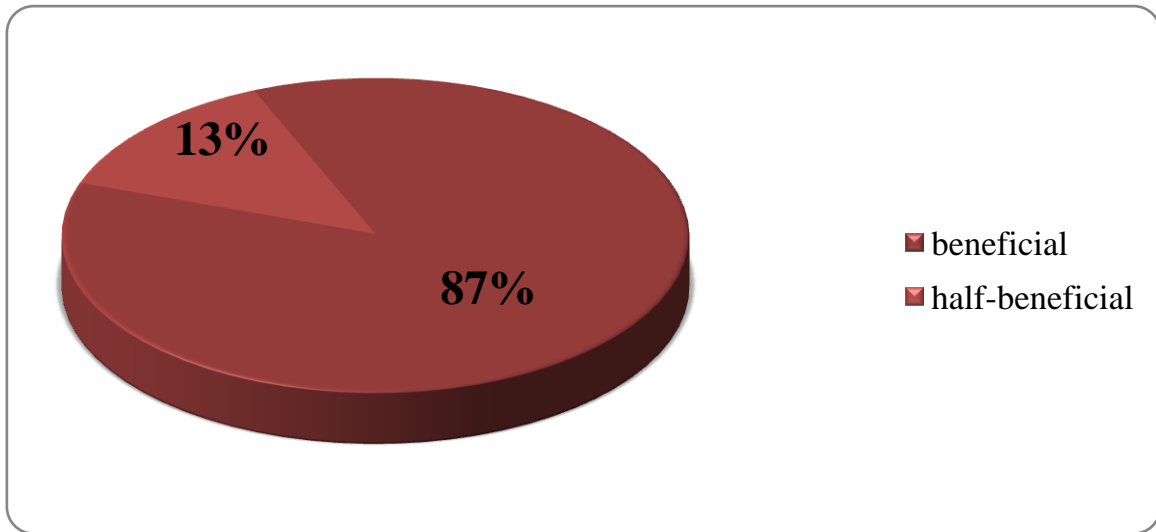
As it is shown above, all the students agree that the video based conference help the students to communicate successfully. They give some arguments to justify their answers:

- ✓ It lets students see one another's facial expressions and body language.
- ✓ Face to face conversations enhance your sense of correctness.
- ✓ It allows them to speak in public first and with another culture which makes it a double practice.
- ✓ There is a direct contact that helps a lot to communicate with foreign students.
- ✓ It allows hearing the voice, seeing the person and the facial expression.
- ✓ There is an exchange of ideas between two different cultures.
- ✓ It helps them to boost their understanding and increase their cultural awareness through integrating a second language.
- ✓ It is very important in interacting with people from other cultures.
- ✓ The links are kind of experiences. Having the chance to communicate with people from all over the world will for sure develop students' level, behaviour and awareness in order to accept other people and other cultures.
- ✓ Enable students who don't have a direct interaction with foreigners to have a good communication.
- ✓ Cooperating in order to exchange ideas.
- ✓ Speaking to a native speaker increase our ability to communicate.
- ✓ Once talking to a foreign person, we improve our language, culture and way of behaving with them. So, once we'll run into a native speaker, we will have fewer problems.
- ✓ It is not like texting, we get the chance to interact with other better by showing our emotions and not by writing them down.

**Question 02:** how does the video conference discussion is qualified by students?

This question was targeted to know the degree of qualification of the video conference discussion given by the students. The majority of them, that is 87%, said

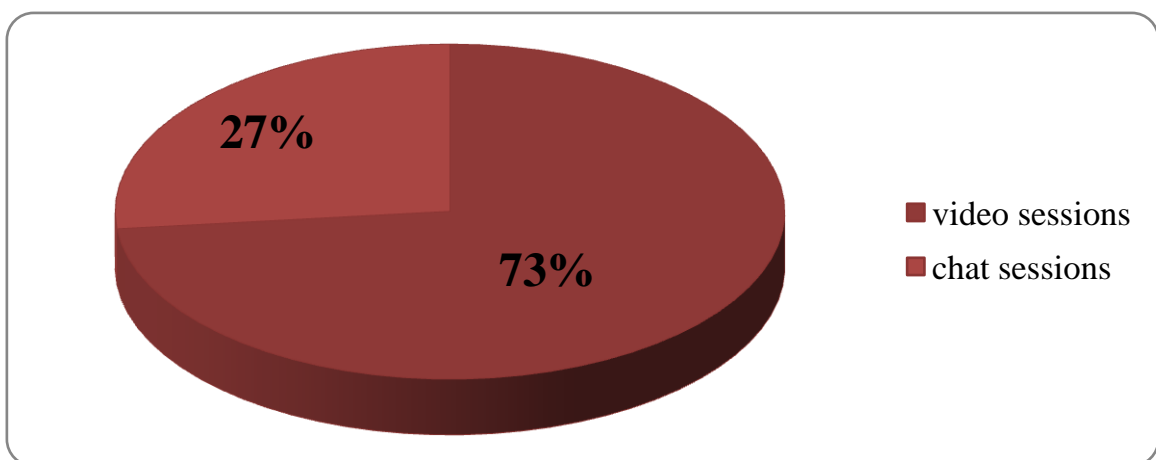
that video conference discussion is beneficial. The obtained results are summarized in the following pie-chart:



**Pie-chart 2.2: The Qualification Degree of the Video Conference Discussion given by the Students**

**Question 03:** what is your preference, chat session or video one?

This question attempted to diagnose the learners' preferable session. The majority of students, that is 73%, prefer the video session. 4 students which represent 27% prefer the chat session. The obtained results are displayed in the following pie-chart:



**Pie-chart 2.3: Students' Preferable Sessions.**

Students who prefer the chat sessions justify their answers with some arguments which are listed below:

- ✓ Chat sessions are more favourable since they do not allow face to face communication and giving time to answer.
- ✓ I feel more comfortable, I can think wisely before answering.
- ✓ It helps me develop my writing production and communication with foreigners.

Concerning the students who answered that the video session are preferable, they also justify their answers by:

- ✓ Video sessions contributed in improving my oral performance.
- ✓ It empowers my speaking skills.
- ✓ You hear more than one opinion and the way of thinking.
- ✓ I love to talk in English; I love to hear different accents and to interact with real faces and not just couple of emoji.
- ✓ The visual contact is more effective and beneficial.
- ✓ We can see people we are talking to. It is more natural communication than the chat.
- ✓ We really get the chance to talk and see our partners. It's almost meeting them virtually. It's more interesting. Besides while speaking, we literally get to know mistakes and correct them for next links.
- ✓ We can all join the conversation bringing different opinions.
- ✓ It makes conversation spontaneous and ideas exchange way easier.
- ✓ In chat sessions, foreigners take time to answer which makes the chat boring.
- ✓ It is more alive.

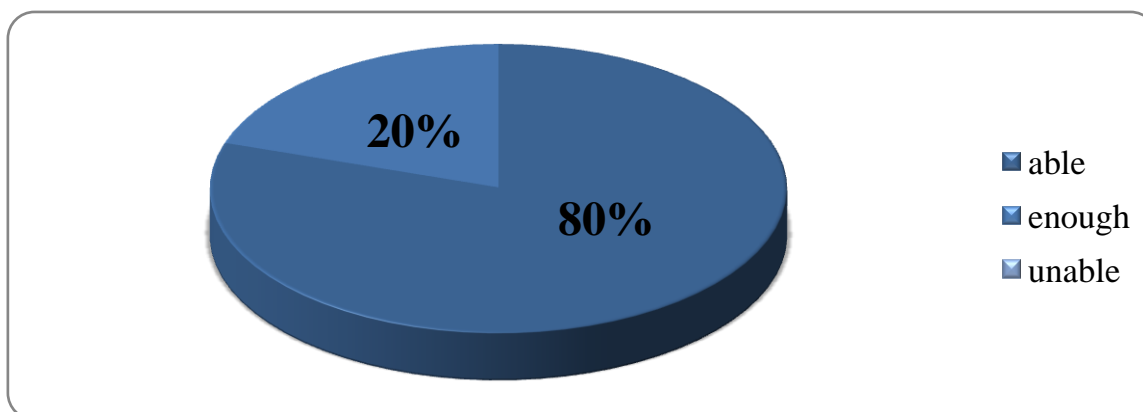
**Question 04:** what do you think about the project?

The majority of students have positive attitudes toward the project except for one student who said that he didn't like it; their answers to this question are as follows:

- ✓ If it was graded, it would be more beneficial.
- ✓ It is very beneficial. We get to know new traditions, get knowledge and it help us to made foreign friends.
- ✓ It is amazing.
- ✓ It is successful and helps students to gain new experience.
- ✓ It is a great opportunity which has merits more than demerits.
- ✓ It is humane, educational, informative and insightful.
- ✓ It is very helpful, it helps a lot to know the real situation of foreigners, and we really enjoy it.
- ✓ It is a very important project since it allows you to know other cultures and points of view.
- ✓ It is a great way to develop, understand and appreciate the different global communities.
- ✓ It is a very good initiative and actually a great experience.
- ✓ It is an interesting, beneficial project who spread global understanding.
- ✓ It is really interesting, we do not have the opportunity to speak to a native speaker, and this project got us closer to get to know them.
- ✓ It is really good; I have never got the chance to take to foreign people and to different cultures, so GVC project was great for me.
- ✓ It is a really good project that helps students to interact with different cultures.

**Question 05:** to what extent are you able to handle communication with foreigners?

This question aims to discover the ability of learners to handle communication with foreigners. The majority of students that is 80% said that they are able to communicate with foreigners. Details occur in the following pie-chart:



**Pie-chart 2.4: The ability of Learners to Handle Communication with Foreigners**

Students who said that they are able give their arguments as follows:

- ✓ Before GVC, I didn't know this much about other cultures except what I saw in movies and TV, but now I know so many things.
- ✓ Once we produced our selves we became friends and could speak easily and reach to some sensitive subjects such as religion.
- ✓ I already communicate with foreigners
- ✓ I got to talk to people from different communities about different topics and issues yanks to GVC.
- ✓ GVC builds up confidence to assume and represent my identity and also accepting others' identity.
- ✓ After getting in touch and communicating with foreign people GVC, we learned more how we can really deals with them.
- ✓ I have enough self confidence equally important the vocabulary as well as the cultural background.

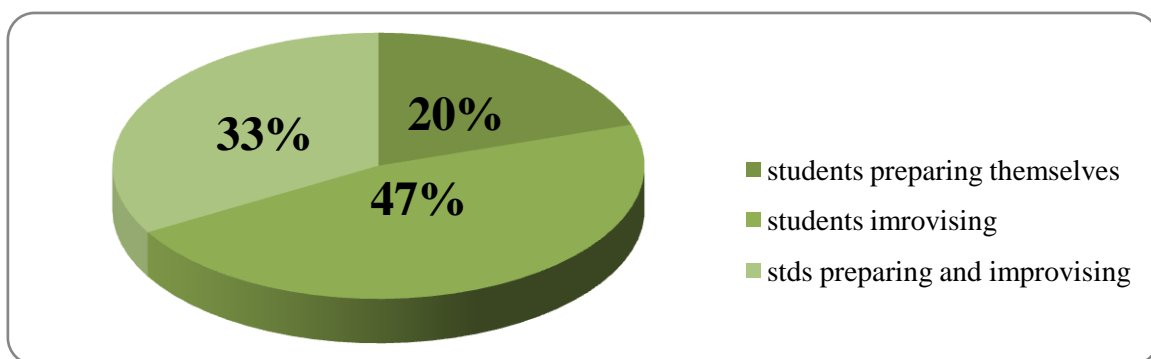
- ✓ We deal with subjects that are easy to handle and we use to prepare ourselves before each link.
- ✓ I studied a lot of cultures and I think GVC has given me an edge to do even more.

Students, who answer “enough”, said that:

- ✓ I only speak when I am sure of the questions. In addition, I was always afraid to say something wrong that will show a not good image because we do not represent ourselves, but our country and religion.
- ✓ We get the habit to communicate with foreigners.
- ✓ My English is acceptable so I could not discuss a lot but at least I can speak.

**Question 06:** did you prepare yourself to the session before or you improvise?

This question was asked as trial to discover if the students prepare themselves before every session. A great population of 7 students out of 15 confirms that they improvise. 5 others who represent 33% said that they prepare before some sessions and improvise in other sessions. However, only 3 students representing 20% said that they prepare themselves before each session. The pie-chart below exposes the results:



**Pie-chart 2.5: Students' Preparation Before Each Session.**



Students answering that they improvise give some reasons which are:

- ✓ I like to explore situations spontaneously, preparing kills the fun. Plus, it is not a home work to do so.
- ✓ You will not always find or get the chance to prepare before link.
- ✓ Communication is not restricted to one topic.

Students answering that they prepare before each session listed their reasons as follows:

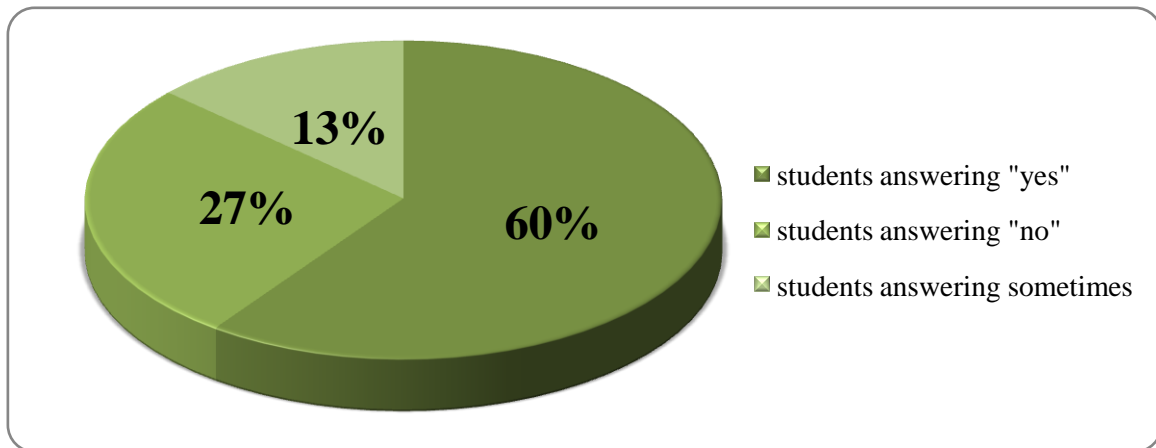
- ✓ To have an idea and prepare questions.
- ✓ They asked us about our culture and religion so we have to give them the best and the right.

Students answering that they use both preparing and improvising said:

- ✓ It was a new experience that is why I needed to prepare in order to be ready for the links. Then, I improvise because I get used to and the links were more interesting especially the one before the last with Americans.
- ✓ If it is a subject in which I got a previous knowledge, I just improvise and if it is not I prepare myself.

**Question 07:** do you think preparation makes you more competent?

The chief concern of this question was to discover if students become more competent when they prepare themselves. The responses show that 9 out of 15 students which represent the majority with 60% answer with “yes”. In contrast to 27% of the whole who answer that preparation is not important. The remaining students (2, that is, 13%) said that sometimes preparation is beneficial. The obtained results are summarized in the following pie-chart:



**Pie-chart 2.6: students' Attitudes Towards the Preparation Before Links.**

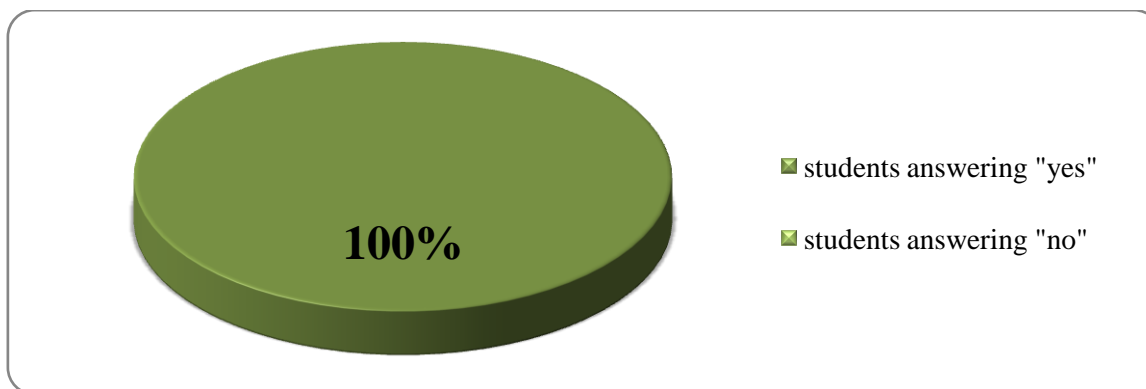
Students saying “No” argue that competence is affected by knowledge we have.

Students saying “Yes” give their reasons which are:

- ✓ It allows making the right remarks and noting the right questions to ask.
- ✓ Facilitate the task of understanding.
- ✓ If we prepare, we discover more about other cultures.

**Question 08:** From the first session till now, do you think you are more Cultural Competent, i.e., did your competence in the matter of cultures you dealt with developed after the GVC sessions' experience?

Concerning this question, all students representing 100% confirm that they become more cultural competent.



**Pie-chart 2.7: Students' Competence After the GVC Sessions' Experience.**

**Question 09:** Select the response that best describe your capabilities. (1. Strongly agree to 5.Strongly disagree)

This question was asked as a test to discover the student's cultural competence. The obtained results are summarized in the following table.

	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures	87%	0%	0%	13%	0%
I am confident that I can socialize with people from a culture that is unfamiliar to me.	60%	33%	7%	0%	0%
I am sure I can deal with the stresses of adjusting to a culture that is new to me. (stereotypes and prejudices)	47%	20%	13%	0%	20%
I know the rules (e.g, vocabulary, grammar) of at least one other language that help me to communicate with the people of that language.	47%	33%	7%	0%	13%
I know the cultural values and beliefs of other cultures.	0%	53%	47%	0%	0%
I know the communication norms and conflicts styles of my own and other cultures.	13%	67%	7%	13%	0%
I understand why others' cultural values, beliefs, behaviors, and perspectives differ from mine.	67%	7%	7%	0%	19%
I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I use when interacting with people with different cultural backgrounds.	27%	40%	13%	7%	7%

I understand how people's behavior makes sense from their perspectives, and seek to learn what that perspective is.	27%	53%	13%	0%	7%
I am conscious of my own social identity and cultural values and beliefs.	73%	13%	0%	7%	7%
I mentally check the accuracy of my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from different cultures.	53%	27%	7%	7%	0%
I am aware of how my own social identity, cultural values and beliefs influence my interactions with others similar to, and different from me.	53%	13%	7%	20%	7%
I modify my verbal behavior when a cross-cultural interaction requires it.	46%	27%	7%	13%	7%
I use pause and silence differently to suit different cross-cultural situations.	40%	33%	13%	7%	7%
I flex my communication style between direct and indirect as the situation requires.	47%	33%	7%	13%	0%

**Table 2.1. The Capabilities of the GVC Students During the Links**

**Question 10:** Prejudices and Stereotypes as Behavior.

a) – How do you behave towards people whom you have prejudices and stereotypes with at the first time?

The answers of this question are summarized as follows:

- ✓ Open minded.
- ✓ With tolerance.
- ✓ Comprehensive.
- ✓ Stereotypes don't affect my behaviour.
- ✓ Ask them to clarify.
- ✓ Keep silence and be passive.
- ✓ Try to know these stereotypes.

b) – How do you behave with people who have prejudices and stereotypes towards you?

Concerning this question, students describe their behavior as listed below:

- ✓ Be silent
- ✓ Open for discussion
- ✓ Try to show that their stereotypes are wrong by reflecting my culture.
- ✓ Try to correct their misunderstanding.

### **2.6.2 Classroom Observation Data Analysis**

Classroom observation was carried out to investigate if the collaboration between cross-cultural students influences their communication and to identify if the members can handle a conversation with others from different cultures, as well as to show if there is break downs in communication.

The observations were carried about eight sessions of the twelve sessions scheduled in the GVC in the Department of English at Tlemcen University, where students had ties with Americans, Mexicans as well as Indians. Subjects were discussed; the mostly debated were the meaning of life and the second concerned stereotypes and prejudices.

- The students are divided into two groups: one group has video-conference and the other has chat in the computers.
- The responsible teacher starts with greetings and introduces the topic of discussion.
- The Collaborators (Americans, Mexicans and Indians) start the conversation in general, example, with Mexicans a question about Algerian members' knowledge about life which according to them is a too general question.
- Another question from to the Algerian students was about Mexicans objectives of life who replied that the goal from life is making family.

- During the whole links the Algerian students were talking in Arabic and laughing .i.e. they were not serious and did not respect their Collaborators.
- In the majority of cases, from the both sides, students deviated from topics to others, example, favorable dishes and drinking in both countries. Besides, the Algerian members were not interested at all in Mexicans and Indians answers and they were waiting for the link to be over.
- There were only three or four members [from the Algerian side] who were participating actively during the whole links, fewer were interacting with the others.
- On the last links with the three institutions, all students were in video conference. There was not chatting in computers, the links ware quite good since students from both sides were participating and sharing.

## **2.7 Data Interpretation of Students' Questionnaire**

This section is concerned with the discussion of students' answers .The results obtained from this questionnaire show that the majority of GVC students have positive attitudes toward the project, in addition to this their cross-cultural competence is influenced positively by the cultural differences between their local culture and the foreign ones.

The results obtained from the questions 1, 2, 8, 9 and 10 confirm that the cultural differences between two cultures affects the cultural skills and strategies of students, since most informants assume that the video-based conference helps the students to handle an interaction with foreigners successfully. Moreover, the plurality of the participants believes that video-conference discussion is very beneficial. They added that they have developed their intercultural competence through GVC programme, i.e. they became culturally more competent than before participation in GVC course.

Concerning the questions 8, 9 and 10 it was concluded that the collaboration between cross-cultural students has an impact on their cultural competence because

all participants replied that they become more competent as well as, some of them agree on the necessity of understanding the cultural differences, being open minded and tolerant, in other words developing cross-cultural competence and awareness through the preparation about the target culture to be culturally sensitive toward it. So, the first hypothesis is confirmed.

## **2.8 Data Interpretation of Classroom Observation**

The data obtained from classroom observation indicate that the actual GVC participants [from the Algerian side] are facing some difficulties during video-conference, and most of them are not participating in the topic discussion. Moreover, they were neglecting the foreign students' answers as they were not interested in others' responses. Finally, one can say that the majority of the members are not motivated toward the video-conference discussion even if they confirm the opposite. As well as, both the Algerian students and the others Collaborators were deviating from the topic of discussion due to the insufficient of knowledge about the topic selected by the teachers. As a conclusion, there is no real exchange of culture, and the differences that exist between cultures since there is knowledge's insufficiency about the topic chosen. This influences the student's cultural competence in a negative manner. As a consequence, the cross-cultural collaboration between the students affects their communication as well as if there is impairment in their competence and not just an improvement. So, the second hypothesis is partially confirmed for the entire group.

## **2.9 Conclusion**

This chapter was basically concerned with introducing the setting where the study was carried out (the GVC). Then, it described the research design, the sample and the instruments used in gathering data (the students' questionnaire and the classroom observation).

Moreover, the researcher tries to analyse the data collected and interpret it to approve or disapprove the hypotheses guiding this research. The conclusion deduced from the interpretation of the results is that the majority of the GVC students' cross-cultural competence is positively affected by the cultural differences exchanged through the programme. In addition, the collaboration between cross-cultural students can influence their communication if there is impairment or an improvement in their cross-cultural competence.



# *General Conclusion*

## **General Conclusion**

Globalisation as tendency leads to amalgamate cultures in various ways, and give birth to internationalised activities due to the express development of technologies and communication around the world. This is translated only with one significant need, which is to nurture students with effective cross-cultural competence, this competence encourages students to have effective communication with those who are culturally different from them. In some cases, people are committed to interact with different cultures through work, travel, or study abroad. Consequently, the cross-cultural communication has become a decisive issue for people as they are part of a multicultural society.

Cross-cultural connections are increasing at an express cadence. This is due to the fact that there is a real growth of international exchanges including transport, communication technologies, and exchange programmes to study abroad, that are mostly cultural exchange programmes. Therefore, to be efficient nowadays is to be effective in communication and interaction with culturally different people that you encounter inside and outside the motherland via the right behaviour, attitudes, and enhancing and improving cross-cultural competencies including awareness and sensitivity no matter the aim of the interaction.

This study emphasised on the role of global understanding project in developing students' cross cultural competence and its impact on their behaviours because they will interact as cross-culturally effective and competent persons.

The first chapter as a theoretical background that provided a set of definitions and illustrations about: cross cultural competence, awareness, sensitivity and the video-based collaboration. It also highlighted the role of the Global Understanding Project programme in promoting cross cultural competence.

The second chapter is an empirical case study which started by description of the Global Virtual Classroom, and students' profile analysis was provided. It also

included a description of research design and instrumentation. Data collected have been analysed and interpreted followed by a discussion.

This study demonstrates that one of the main essential factors to develop students' cross cultural competence is to expose them to realistic situations through the Global Understanding Project. This programme, in turn, is thought and a notion to promote peace and global understanding among and between students. Consequently, acquiring a global knowledge about different cultures will help students to be good global citizens and to adapt to the multicultural society.

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# *Appendices*

# Appendix A

## Students' Questionnaire

The present questionnaire aims at investigating and enlightening the impact of the Global Understanding Project on students through the Global Virtual Classroom (GVC), and the way their Cross-Cultural Competences are developed. Your answers are required for the validity and the fulfillment of this research. You are kindly invited to answer objectively these questions.

Student #: ..... Age: ..... Level: .....

Specialty: .....

Questions:

1) – Does the Video Based Conference enable students to handle a successful communication?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

Why?.....  
.....

2) – How does the Video Conference discussion is qualified by students?

Beneficial		Half- Beneficial		Non- Beneficial	
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3) – What is your preference, Chat session or Video one?  
.....

Why?.....  
.....  
.....

4) – What do you think about the project?

.....  
.....

5) – To what extent are you able to handle communication with foreigners (through your experience at the GVC sessions)?

Able		Enough		Unable	
------	--	--------	--	--------	--

Why?.....  
.....

6) – Did you prepare yourself to the session before or you improvise?

.....

Why?.....  
.....

7) – Do you think preparation makes you more competent?.....

.....  
.....

8) – From the first session till now, do you think you are more Cultural Competent, i.e., did your competence in the matter of cultures you dealt with developed after the GVC's session experience?

.....  
 .....  
 9) – Select the response that best describe your capabilities. (1. Strongly agree to 5.Strongly disagree)

	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures					
I am confident that I can socialize with people from a culture that is unfamiliar to me.					
I am sure I can deal with the stresses of adjusting to a culture that is new to me. (stereotypes and prejudices)					
I know the rules (e.g, vocabulary, grammar) of at least one other language that help me to communicate with the people of that language.					
I know the cultural values and beliefs of other cultures.					
I know the communication norms and conflicts styles of my own and other cultures.					
I understand why others' cultural values, beliefs, behaviors, and perspectives differ from mine.					
I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I use when interacting with people with different cultural backgrounds.					
I understand how people's behavior makes sense from their perspectives, and seek to learn what that perspective is.					
I am conscious of my own social identity and cultural values and beliefs.					
I mentally check the accuracy of my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from different cultures.					
I am aware of how my own social identity, cultural values and beliefs influence my interactions with others similar to, and different from me.					
I modify my verbal behavior when a cross-cultural interaction					

requires it.					
I use pause and silence differently to suit different cross-cultural situations.					
I flex my communication style between direct and indirect as the situation requires.					

10) – Prejudices and Stereotypes as Behavior.

a) – How do you behave towards people whom you have prejudices and stereotypes with at the first time?

.....  
 .....

b) – How do you behave with people who have prejudices and stereotypes towards you?

.....  
 .....

**Thank you...**

## ملخص

تهدف هذه الرسالة إلى دراسة تأثير التعاون القائم على الفيديو في تنمية قدرة الكفاءة بين الثقافات لدى الطلاب من خلال مشروع التفاهم العالمي، باعتباره برنامجا افتراضيا بين الثقافات يدعى المدرسة الافتراضية العالمية (GVC) في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة تلمسان. القضية الرئيسية لهذه الدراسة هي معرفة ما إذا كان برنامج تنمية قدرة الكفاءة بين الثقافات يساعد الطلاب على تطوير كفاءتهم الثقافية [تغطي الوعي والحساسية] تجاه الثقافات المختلفة.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الثقافة، التعاون القائم على الفيديو، قدرة الكفاءة بين الثقافات، التفاهم العالمي، المدرسة الافتراضية العالمية، التوعية الثقافية، الحساسية الثقافية.

## Summary

The present dissertation aims at studying the impact of video-based collaboration on students' cross-cultural competence development through the Global Understanding project, as a virtual cross-cultural programme named the Global Virtual Classroom (GVC) at the English Department in Tlemcen University. The main issue of this study is to know whether the cross-cultural programme helps students to develop their cross-cultural competence [covering awareness and sensitivity] toward different cultures.

**Key-Words:** Culture, Video-Based Collaboration, Cross-Cultural Competence, Global Understanding, Global Virtual Classroom, Cultural Awareness, Cultural Sensitivity.

## Résumé

La présente dissertation vise à étudier l'impact de la collaboration vidéo sur le développement des compétences interculturelles des étudiants par le biais du projet Global Understanding, en tant que programme interculturel virtuel appelé Global Virtual Classroom (GVC) au département d'anglais de l'Université de Tlemcen. Le principal problème de cette étude est de savoir si le programme interculturel aide les étudiants à développer leurs compétences interculturelles (sensibilisation et sensibilité) envers différentes cultures.

**Mots clés:** Culture, Collaboration Vidéo, Compétence Interculturelle, Compréhension Globale, Classe Virtuelle Globale, Sensibilisation Culturelle, Sensibilité Culturelle.