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Track (10): Using Technology in Teaching History, Culture, and Civilization in EFL Classes

Participation Title: **Unlocking the Past: Technology's Role in Teaching History, Culture, and Civilization in EFL**

Abstract

Unveiling the captivating tapestry of history, culture, and civilization can be an enriching journey for EFL learners, fostering global understanding and appreciation. However, bringing these distant worlds to life in the classroom can be challenging. Technology offers a powerful solution, bridging the gap between textbook knowledge and the vibrant realities of the past and present. Hence, this study delves into the potential of technology to transform the teaching of history, culture, and civilization in EFL classes. It explores how digital tools can go beyond static information, creating dynamic and engaging learning experiences. The sample comprises fifteen teachers of English affiliated with the University of El Oued. Data collection for this study is facilitated through questionnaire administered via Google Forms. Data are analysed qualitatively. The results indicate a strong consensus. For instance, technology empowers educators to effectively teach history through methods such as visualizing the past, facilitating access to primary sources, and engaging students in interactive simulations. Moreover, technology enhances the teaching of culture by providing access to music and art from diverse cultures and facilitating cultural immersion experiences. Additionally, technology enables teachers to explore the complexities of civilization by facilitating global interconnectivity, fostering a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness of cultures and historical events. Based on these findings, the research recommends that educators should prioritize teacher training to equip them with the skills and resources necessary to effectively integrate technology into their teaching practices. Furthermore, it is crucial to develop students' digital literacy skills, empowering them to critically evaluate online resources and use technology responsibly.

Keywords: culture, civilization, EFL classes, history, teaching, technology

Introduction

The world of history, culture, and civilization is a captivating tapestry woven with threads of time, tradition, and human experience. For English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, unraveling this tapestry can be an enriching journey, expanding their understanding of the world and fostering a deeper appreciation for diverse perspectives. Engaging with historical events, exploring cultural practices, and understanding the interconnectedness of civilizations can broaden their horizons and ignite a passion for global learning.

However, bringing these distant worlds to life in the EFL classroom often presents challenges. Traditional methods of teaching, relying primarily on textbooks and lectures, can sometimes feel static and detached from the vibrant realities of the past and present. Students may struggle to connect with historical events or grasp the complexities of cultural traditions without experiencing them in a more immersive and engaging way.

This is where technology emerges as a powerful solution. Digital tools offer the potential to bridge the gap between textbook knowledge and the vibrant realities of the past and present, creating dynamic learning experiences that transport students to historical moments, immerse them in cultural contexts, and inspire deeper engagement with the fascinating stories of humanity. Technology can transform the classroom into a gateway to a vibrant past, connecting students to a global tapestry of knowledge and understanding.

Aim of the Study

This study delves into the potential of technology to transform the teaching of history, culture, and civilization in EFL classes. It explores how digital tools can go beyond static information, creating dynamic and engaging learning experiences.

Research Methodology

To answer the mentioned research question, a qualitative research design is adopted to collect data using a questionnaire administered via Google form. Data are analysed qualitatively.

Findings Stemmed from the Analysis of the Questionnaire

The results reveal that most respondents are unanimous among respondents regarding the significant value of technology in teaching history, culture, and civilization. These findings highlight a range of benefits. For instance,

Cultural Immersion: Students can take a virtual tour of a Japanese tea ceremony, watching the steps and learning about the rituals and symbolism involved.

Technology offers immersive experiences that can bring diverse cultures to life for EFL learners. Virtual field trips allow students to explore bustling markets in Marrakech, marvel at the Great Wall of China, or wander the streets of Tokyo, gaining firsthand exposure to different cultural landscapes. Virtual tours of homes provide insights into how people in various cultures live, revealing their unique architecture, furniture, and daily routines. Additionally, watching videos of cultural festivals, dances, and performances provides a window into the traditions and customs of different cultures, fostering a deeper appreciation for their diversity and richness.

Online Music Libraries: Students can explore traditional music and instruments from different cultures, developing an appreciation for their diversity. **Art Galleries:** Virtual tours of online art galleries allow students to see artworks from different periods and cultures, fostering a deeper understanding of artistic expressions.

Technology provides a powerful avenue for exploring the rich tapestry of music and art from diverse cultures. Online music libraries offer a treasure trove of traditional music and instruments from around the world, allowing students to develop an appreciation for their unique sounds and styles. Virtual tours of online art galleries offer a similar immersive experience, enabling students to view artworks from different periods and cultures, fostering a deeper understanding of artistic expression and its evolution across time and geographic locations.

Visualizing the Past: Using a 360° virtual tour of Pompeii, students can experience the city before the eruption of Mount Vesuvius, seeing the streets, homes, and shops as they were.

Primary Sources: Students can access the diary of Anne Frank online, reading her experiences during the Holocaust and gaining a deeper understanding of the historical context.

Interactive Simulations: Students can participate in a virtual simulation of the Battle of Hastings, making strategic decisions and learning about the factors that led to the Norman Conquest.

Technology empowers educators to bring history to life for EFL learners in engaging and immersive ways. Through 360° virtual tours, students can experience Pompeii as it was before the eruption of Mount Vesuvius, walking its streets and seeing its homes and shops as they once were. Access to primary sources, such as Anne Frank's diary, provides firsthand accounts of historical events, allowing students to gain a deeper understanding of the personal experiences and contexts of the past. Interactive simulations, such as those recreating the Battle of Hastings, allow students to make strategic decisions and learn about the factors that shaped historical outcomes, fostering a more dynamic and interactive understanding of the past.

Global Interconnectivity: Students can view a map showing the Silk Road, seeing how trade routes connected different civilizations and led to cultural exchanges.

Technology can illuminate the interconnectedness of civilizations by visually demonstrating global trade routes and cultural exchanges. Students can explore interactive maps that trace the Silk Road, for example, witnessing how this ancient network connected diverse cultures and facilitated the flow of goods, ideas, and artistic influences across vast distances. This visual representation fosters a deeper understanding of how civilizations have interacted and

influenced each other throughout history, highlighting the interconnected nature of human development.

Conclusion

By embracing these recommendations, EFL educators can harness the transformative power of technology to create dynamic and engaging learning experiences that bring history, culture, and civilization to life for their students. Through innovative approaches that leverage digital tools, educators can inspire a deeper understanding and appreciation of the interconnectedness of our world and empower learners to become informed global citizens. This study serves as a call to action for educators to embrace technology as a vital tool for enriching the EFL classroom experience and fostering a more meaningful and impactful learning journey for students.