Enhancing the Performance of Higher Education Tutors through the Integration of Translated Cultural Experiences in Teaching

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A B S T R A C T

Determining what to include in higher education teaching materials has long been a complex challenge. Pursuing a progressive future in education necessitates the integration of contemporary global experiences and cultural perspectives alongside local knowledge. This paper explores various strategies for incorporating cross-cultural experiences through translation to enhance lecturers' teaching effectiveness. The primary objective is to encourage higher education lecturers to incorporate diverse cultural experiences into both their teaching materials and methodologies. The research focuses on a significant issue: Libyan students in higher social studies education often struggle when interacting internationally with peers of the same educational level. They frequently perceive themselves as less qualified, particularly during participation in international conferences. This raises critical questions: Do Libyan students in higher education receive sufficient exposure to diverse cultural experiences that enhance their confidence in cross-cultural interactions? Are their instructors incorporating adequate content from other cultures to foster these skills? Furthermore, are contemporary, varied teaching methods being employed? We hypothesize that lecturers predominantly rely on teaching materials rooted in their own cultural background, with limited inclusion of global experiences, and utilize outdated teaching methods. A qualitative research approach was adopted, with data gathered through interviews with tutors at this educational level. Preliminary findings reveal that higher education tutors in social studies lack dynamism in their teaching practices, failing to integrate cross-cultural scientific experiences into their curriculum. Moreover, these tutors continue to rely on traditional, outdated teaching techniques. While this study focuses on social and linguistic studies, we recommend that lecturers incorporate translations of diverse cultural experiences into their teaching materials and adopt modern pedagogical methods. This approach would broaden the learning scope and encourage students to engage in similar cross-cultural explorations.

Keywords: higher education, cross-cultural experiences, teaching materials, teaching methods, Libyan students, translation, pedagogy, social studies

تعزيز أداء محاضري التعليم العالي من خلال دمج التجارب الثقافية المترجمة في التدريس

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الملخص

تعد عملية تحديد ما ينبغي تضمينه في مواد التدريس في التعليم العالي من التحديات المعقدة المستمرة. إن السعي نحو تطوير

تعليم مستدام وفعّال يتطلب دمج التجارب العالمية المعاصرة ووجهات النظر الثقافية المتنوعة مع المعرفة المحلية. يستعرض هذا البحث استراتيجيات متنوعة لدمج التجارب الثقافية عبر الترجمة لتعزيز فعالية التدريس لدى المحاضرين. يهدف البحث إلى تشجيع الأكاديميين في التعليم العالي على دمج التجارب الثقافية المتعددة في مواد التدريس وأساليب التعليم المعتمدة.

يركز البحث على إشكالية هامة: يعاني الطلاب الليبيون في الدراسات العليا في العلوم الاجتماعية من تحديات كبيرة عند التفاعل مع أقرانهم دوليًا على نفس المستوى الأكاديمي، حيث يشعرون في كثير من الأحيان بنقص في التأهيل، لا سيما في المؤتمرات الدولية. تثير هذه المشكلة العديد من الأسئلة المهمة: هل يتلقى الطلاب الليبيون في التعليم العالي التفاعل الكافي مع تجارب ثقافية متنوعة تعزز من ثقتهم في التفاعل عبر الثقافات؟ وهل يقوم الأكاديميون بإدراج محتوى متنوع ثقافيًا في مناهجهم الدراسية لدعم هذه المهارات؟ وهل يتم استخدام أساليب تدريس حديثة ومتنوعة؟

نفترض في هذا البحث أن المحاضرين يعتمدون بشكل أساسي على مواد تدريس تتماشى مع خلفياتهم الثقافية الخاصة، مع دمج محدود للتجارب العالمية، ويستمرون في استخدام أساليب تدريس تقليدية. اعتمد البحث منهجًا نوعيًا في جمع البيانات من خلال إجراء مقابلات مع الأكاديميين في هذا المجال. أظهرت النتائج الأولية أن المحاضرين في مجالات الدراسات الاجتماعية يعانون من نقص في الديناميكية في ممارساتهم التعليمية، ولا يدمجون التجارب العلمية عبر الثقافات في مناهجهم. كما أظهرت النتائج استمرارهم في الاعتماد على الأساليب التدريسية التقليدية.

على الرغم من أن هذه الدراسة تركز على مجالات الدراسات الاجتماعية واللغوية، فإننا نوصي المحاضرين بدمج ترجمات للتجارب الثقافية المتنوعة في موادهم التعليمية، وتبني أساليب تربوية معاصرة. من شأن هذا النهج أن يساهم في توسيع آفاق التعلم، ويحفز الطلاب على المشاركة في استكشافات عبر الثقافات.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التعليم العالي، التجارب عبر الثقافات، مواد التدريس، أساليب التدريس، الطلاب الليبيون، الترجمة، التربية، الدراسات الاجتماعية.

Introduction

Numerous scholars have highlighted the critical role that the selection of appropriate teaching materials plays in enhancing both teaching and learning processes. Among these scholars, McCarthy (1995), Eelen (2016), (2016), and Levinson (1983) emphasize that the careful selection of instructional materials is essential before, during, and after the educational process. They argue that within the field of education, it is vital to align the teaching content with clearly defined learning objectives. This alignment enables educators to thoroughly plan or adapt specific elements of the curriculum, thereby achieving educational goals and employing appropriate instructional strategies.

The selection of teaching materials must account for the learners' age group, subject matter, and the instructor's teaching style. Different age groups respond differently to the materials presented, necessitating the selection of resources that are age-appropriate. While some materials may serve general pedagogical purposes, others are tailored to specific subject areas or topics. Even when these factors are considered, personal preference often plays a significant role in determining the most effective materials for classroom use.

Teaching Materials and Their Role in Enhancing Student Performance

Cultural diversity remains a topic of extensive discussion in various academic and social contexts. When individuals from different backgrounds engage in discourse, especially when they are unfamiliar with one another, the topic of cultural diversity often arises. In developed countries, the integration of diverse cultural perspectives into teaching and academic activities is common. However, in many developing countries, this practice is less prevalent. Scholars such as Ahlberg et al. (2008) contend that the inclusion of cultural diversity in academic settings has proven beneficial for postgraduate students, particularly in enhancing their academic engagement.

This research addresses the challenges faced by Libyan postgraduate students in social studies when interacting with peers at international academic forums. These students often experience feelings of inadequacy during international conferences, which leads to the central research question: "Do Libyan postgraduate students receive sufficient exposure to diverse cultural experiences to build confidence in cross-cultural interactions?" To fully address this question, it is necessary to explore whether instructors integrate adequate multicultural content into their teaching materials and whether they employ varied instructional methodologies that reflect cultural diversity. The hypothesis underlying this research posits that Libyan lecturers predominantly rely on culturally homogenous materials and teaching approaches, which may limit students' ability to engage confidently in cross-cultural discussions.

Cultural Diversity and Pedagogy

Cultural diversity must be incorporated into contemporary pedagogical practices, academic discourse, and instruction. University education in the social sciences, particularly in developing contexts, often adopts a descriptive approach, contrasting with the emphasis on innovation in the natural sciences. One major obstacle to integrating modern social science theories is the language barrier, as many culturally diverse perspectives are not readily accessible in the language of instruction. Consequently, both instructors and students are often restricted to engaging with diverse cultural perspectives through the lens of scholars from their cultural backgrounds..

This research explores three key themes: first, the role of cultural diversity in improving teaching and learning processes for postgraduate students in social studies; second, the strategies and tools available for authentically promoting cultural diversity in academic settings; and third, the most significant theoretical insights regarding cultural diversity's role in higher education.

Theoretical Implications

The research presents several important findings, with the most significant being the importance of fostering cultural diversity and identifying methods that enable postgraduate students to engage confidently and effectively in discussions with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. Participation in international conferences and workshops, when grounded in authentic knowledge

acquisition and dialogic practices, equips students with the skills needed to assert their arguments persuasively.

However, as Alvesson (2002) explains that cultural diversity can be compromised when it is filtered through translations that do not accurately represent the native cultural perspectives. The true understanding of cultural diversity should be based on texts authored by scholars from the respective cultures, rather than relying on interpretations by scholars from different cultural backgrounds. Promoting cultural diversity does not necessarily require educators or students to be bilingual or multilingual; instead, contemporary translation technologies can facilitate more effective teaching and learning by ensuring access to native perspectives.

Risks Associated with Translating Cultural Diversity

Relying on translated materials to construct arguments introduces several risks. Bassnett and Lefevere (1998) caution that using translations in academic discourse may inadvertently introduce bias, as translators may impose their own cultural or personal influences on the text. This risk underscores the importance of embracing cultural diversity as a key element in teaching and learning, but it also highlights the potential for misrepresentation or misjudgment, particularly in international academic contexts. Such risks can undermine the effectiveness of both written and oral discussions.

Types of Translation and the Risks of Misunderstanding

Translation can result in significant misunderstandings, especially when the original meaning of a text is altered during translation. Writers or speakers who rely on translated works by unfamiliar authors may inadvertently adopt interpretations that do not align with the original intent. As Ahlberg et.al. (2022), Åkerlind and Kayrooz (2003) argue, academic freedom requires scholars to develop their understanding of other cultures directly, rather than through secondary translations. Antman and Olsson (2007) also emphasize the need for individuals, particularly when engaging in cross-cultural discourse, to ground their arguments in the perspectives of native scholars. Failing to do so may lead to misconceptions and misinterpretations, resulting in conflict or misunderstanding during cross-cultural exchanges.

For example, differences in cultural values can shape the way certain topics, such as the upbringing of female adults, are perceived. In Arab and Western contexts, this subject may be treated with similar importance, but the cultural values that underpin the discussion differ significantly. Consequently, when an Arab instructor relies on materials that reflect Western values, or vice versa, it may lead to misunderstandings or a failure to convey the intended message. However, the primary aim of this study is to explore whether Libyan postgraduate education incorporates cultural diversity into teaching practices and student activities. Specifically, the research examines whether Libyan lecturers draw on recent, diverse experiences from other cultures in their teaching

and training. Brown and Levinson (1987) and Leech (1983) have extensively addressed the potential misunderstandings that arise from cultural differences, particularly when these differences are included in interactional contexts.

Utilizing a qualitative research approach, this study argues that a failure to account for cultural diversity and personal differences in teaching materials can lead to misconceptions, misunderstandings, and even conflict during cross-cultural interactions. These misunderstandings often stem from differing interpretations of intentions, leading participants to perceive each other's contributions as inappropriate. Consequently, the study emphasizes the need to address these issues in teaching methods before moving on to the analysis and discussion of cross-cultural interactions. Misunderstandings in cross-cultural communication may result in participants feeling alienated or misunderstood, further complicating academic discourse.

Reasons and Risks of Misunderstanding in Cross-Cultural Interactions

The reliance on certain authors' interpretations of specific cultures presents a substantial risk of not only misunderstandings but also conflicts between interlocutors. Unlike other types of intellectual discourse, forming opinions about a culture through the lens of another writer's perspectives on foreign cultures can result in misjudgments. Evaluating cultural practices based on one's own values—without taking into account the nuanced differences between cultures—further exacerbates this risk. As Macaulay (2001) and Leech (1983) contend, personal bias is an inevitable factor when individuals write about other cultures. Thus, when writers adopt others' viewpoints on cross-cultural matters, there is a significant risk that they may unknowingly absorb those authors' subjective, pragmatic ideas.

The translation of cultural content often results from an attempt to articulate differences between cultures. However, using these differences to promote either negative or positive perceptions of cultural phenomena can lead to distorted representations. Misunderstandings may arise from the biases of the original writer or a secondary individual relying on an inaccurate translation. Conveying cultural meaning is a complex process that demands meticulous attention. As Åkerlind, and Kayrooz, (2003) and Hervey and Higgins (1992) assert, language is integral to the preservation of culture and its symbolic and value-laden meanings. They emphasize that when cultural values are communicated to the public, accuracy must be paramount. Writers and translators must resist the temptation to impose personal biases in their work, as some translations are strategically manipulated to privilege one culture over another.

Translation and Cultural Differences

When translating, cultural distance requires careful attention, whether by a professional translator or any individual. Abdelgader (2014) emphasizes the need to carefully consider implicit information to align with the general background knowledge of the intended audience, ensuring

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the accurate conveyance of meaning. He posits that when translating cultural values for individuals from different backgrounds, the degree of shared knowledge between the source and target audiences must first be established. Differences in cultural context, as Abdelgader notes, can significantly influence the translation process. For instance, cultural practices in one or two Arab countries may not apply to the broader Arab world, and overgeneralization can lead to misunderstandings. Writers must consider these particularities to ensure that their audience comprehends the cultural specificities they seek to convey.

This issue is further explored by anthropologist Abu-Lughod (2012), who underscores the centrality of culture in cross-cultural discussions. She argues that "searches for difference" are key to interpreting and understanding cultural distinctions. As long as writers remain uninfluenced by external biases, cultural differences can be understood through the delineation of strict boundaries between East and West. This cognitive distinction between cultural regions tends to affirm the uniqueness, cohesion, and longevity of specific cultures. Abu-Lughod's insights suggest that evaluations of other cultures should not be based on external cultural values. The challenge of Orientalism, for example, lies not in racial distinctions but in the exploration of cultural differences.

Teaching Materials and the Mother Tongue

Lecturers often prefer teaching materials that are readily comprehensible. For instance, an Arabic-speaking lecturer may favor resources written in Arabic, avoiding texts in other languages due to the additional time and effort required to translate or comprehend them. This preference for materials in the mother tongue is practical but presents a significant risk: such materials may carry unintentional or intentional biases from the original authors. Intentional bias occurs when a writer harbors specific positive or negative intentions about the culture in question, while unintentional bias arises when writers impose their own cultural values on the cultures they describe. Although lecturers frequently make informed decisions about which materials to use and how to adapt them for their teaching objectives, the authenticity of these materials is paramount. Authenticity ensures that cross-cultural interactions are based on accurate representations, minimizing the risk of misunderstandings. While postgraduate lecturers typically demonstrate expertise in selecting appropriate materials and meeting students' needs, it remains crucial to examine the extent to which these materials align with the educational goals.

Translation and Cross-Cultural Teaching Materials

When addressing cross-cultural issues in teaching, lecturers often rely on either pre-translated materials or their own translations of culturally significant content. Each approach carries distinct risks.

Pre-Translated Materials

Relying on pre-translated texts entails the inherent risk of adopting another individual's translation, which may be subject to intentional or unintentional distortions. Regardless of the translation methods used, the possibility of dishonesty—driven by political, religious, personal, or national agendas—remains. Venuti (2000) stresses that lecturers can either invest significant time in evaluating the authenticity of such materials or accept the risk of presenting biased or distorted content to their students.(documenting)

Self-Translated Materials

Alternatively, lecturers may translate materials themselves. This method requires a deep understanding of both translation techniques and the cultural nuances embedded in the source material. Furthermore, lecturers must consider whether the material they are translating was originally written by a native speaker or by an outsider interpreting a foreign culture. The distinction between an insider's perspective and an outsider's interpretation is critical in ensuring accurate cultural representation.

Translation and Meaning in Cross-Cultural Contexts

Achieving accurate translation—particularly in cross-cultural contexts—remains a complex challenge. While some scholars argue that translation accuracy depends on its intended purpose, the question of whether accurate translation is feasible remains a topic of ongoing debate. Hatim, and Mason, (1990) explain that translation is fundamentally concerned with the transfer of meaning, with cultural meaning often taking precedence over literal translation. However, this does not imply that cultural meaning should be prioritized at the expense of other important considerations. The translator's primary responsibility is to ensure that cultural meaning is conveyed accurately and comprehensively. As Zgusta (1971) explains, every word carries a unique personality, and this individuality must be respected in translation, particularly when transferring cultural values between languages. A word's "lexical meaning"—its distinct character in both its original and target language contexts—presents significant challenges for translators, particularly when cross-cultural materials are involved. Translators must reflect on the cultural implications of their work and account for the complexities of cultural transference, as translation always involves some degree of cultural transfer.

In conclusion, the challenges of cross-cultural translation are numerous, from ensuring accuracy in cultural representation to navigating the complexities of meaning in both source and target languages. Lecturers selecting teaching materials must be vigilant, relying on their own judgment to avoid introducing biased or inaccurate content into the classroom. The translation of cultural differences, especially in an academic context, requires not only linguistic proficiency but also a deep understanding of the cultural nuances that underpin the language itself. Ultimately, while

formal and cultural equivalence between languages is rare, it is possible to achieve a satisfactory translation through careful consideration and expertise.

Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research approach, focusing on data collected through interviews with six lecturers teaching postgraduate students. The interviews, each lasting approximately ten minutes, were structured around ten core questions that explored the inclusion and use of cross-cultural translated materials in their teaching, activities, and discussions with postgraduate students. The aim of these interviews was to investigate whether lecturers incorporate materials from other cultures into their teaching practices and if they translate these materials for use in their lectures. Furthermore, the study seeks to determine if lecturers integrate cultural differences into their pedagogy to enhance student performance.

Data Analysis and Discussion

As previously discussed, cross-cultural interactions are subject to a variety of factors, both cultural and personal, that can lead to misunderstandings and perceptions of inappropriateness. This study focuses on the integration of cross-cultural issues in postgraduate teaching, specifically examining whether lecturers incorporate materials from different cultures and the appropriateness of these cross-cultural selections. Golato (2003) addresses the influence of writers on one another, particularly in terms of how cultural values shape writing about other cultures. For the purpose of this study, several interview responses have been translated into English to cater to the intended readership.

Data Collection Methods

Data were gathered through interviews designed to explore the use of culturally diverse teaching materials by lecturers across various departments in the social sciences, including sociology, psychology, philosophy, linguistics, and Arabic and Islamic studies. The primary research questions guiding this study are: *Do Libyan postgraduate students receive sufficient exposure to cross-cultural experiences that would enhance their ability to engage with individuals from different cultural backgrounds?* and *Do their lecturers include enough materials from other cultures to improve students' interaction skills?* To address these questions, the interviewees responded to a series of open-ended questions designed to cover a broad spectrum of topics relevant to the study. In total, 14 questions were posed, and the responses were analyzed qualitatively.

The interview responses were varied. For example, when asked how they divide their teaching materials between traditional and cross-cultural sources, seven lecturers stated that they used a range of materials, although only three confirmed the inclusion of cross-cultural content. Two

lecturers explained that they integrate cross-cultural materials, such as English and Arabic texts, into their teaching and activities. One lecturer remarked:

> *"I incorporate a variety of readings in my teaching, utilizing them in group discussions and activities. Exploring different cultural values has enriched our classroom discussions."*

Another lecturer observed:

> *"When confronted with perspectives that conflict with our cultural values, students often feel compelled to assert their own culture, especially when religious issues are at play."*

These responses suggest that lecturers are aware of the significance of using diverse materials to enhance postgraduate students' cultural awareness and skills.

Concerning Translated Materials

One critical question posed to the interviewees was whether they include materials from other cultures in their teaching. This query aimed to assess the extent to which lecturers rely on translated teaching materials. Most participants confirmed that they incorporate such materials, although four lecturers noted that they primarily use texts written by Arab authors about other cultures. One lecturer commented:

> *"I use materials in my teaching that discuss other cultures, but they are written by Arab authors. It is challenging to find high-quality translated materials or translate them myself."*

Four of the lecturers acknowledged that they occasionally find suitable translated materials for their postgraduate courses, although one lecturer remarked:

> *I attempted to translate some teaching materials once, but the process was extremely difficult."*

This difficulty in accessing or producing translated materials aligns with Harmer's (2002) discussion of the challenges lecturers face when teaching cross-cultural topics. Harmer highlights the importance of incorporating translated materials to improve student outcomes but acknowledges the difficulties lecturers encounter in doing so.

The issue of translation was further explored by asking lecturers how they manage the translation of teaching materials. Five participants indicated that they rely on pre-translated texts rather than translating materials themselves. One lecturer explained:

> *"I prefer to use materials that have already been translated or that are written by Arab scholars, as both my students and I find these easier to comprehend. I once attempted to translate materials but lacked confidence in selecting appropriate texts."*

This response reveals a significant challenge: lecturers often struggle with the task of translating materials, which may expose them to the risks previously identified in the literature. It is crucial for lecturers to diversify their teaching materials to include a range of cultural perspectives to enrich postgraduate education.

Impact on Students

When asked whether exposure to cross-cultural materials strengthens students' academic and intercultural abilities, nearly all participants agreed on the benefits of comparing and contrasting materials from different cultures. One lecturer noted:

> *"In one session, I incorporated materials from three different cultures, all translated into Arabic by Arab scholars. Despite the texts being in Arabic, we had meaningful discussions on cultural differences."*

While lecturers acknowledge the importance of cross-cultural teaching, they often depend on existing translations rather than preparing materials themselves. This reliance on translated texts highlights a potential gap in the development of lecturers' intercultural teaching strategies.

Use of Technology in Translation

To gauge lecturers' familiarity with translation technologies, interviewees were asked whether they had ever translated materials for their courses using technological tools. All participants affirmed the significance of cross-cultural materials in teaching postgraduate students, with three lecturers mentioning that they had used tools like Google Translate to aid in the translation process. One participant stated:

> *"My colleagues and I have shared translated teaching materials, but the process is labor-intensive and not feasible on a regular basis."*

The final set of questions addressed whether lecturers encourage their students to engage with cross-cultural materials and whether these interactions influence their beliefs. Although all participants emphasized the importance of cross-cultural exposure, some expressed concerns about the potential for students to develop misconceptions about other cultures. These findings suggest that while lecturers recognize the value of cross-cultural education, they remain cautious about the risks involved in presenting materials that may be misinterpreted by students.

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Findings

The analysis of the interview responses reveals a wide variation in the perspectives of lecturers regarding the inclusion of cross-cultural materials in their teaching, as well as the methodologies employed to integrate such content. A significant portion of the interviewed lecturers demonstrated differing levels of understanding and approaches to the incorporation of cross-cultural materials. Some expressed concerns about the potential influence that exposure to foreign cultural values might have on their students. These lecturers voiced apprehensions that, without careful guidance, students might adopt unfamiliar cultural norms or values that could conflict with their own cultural backgrounds. This fear of negative influence highlights the challenges faced by educators in striking a balance between enriching cultural exposure and maintaining cultural integrity.

Moreover, responses varied significantly concerning how lecturers structure their teaching materials and the extent to which they incorporate recent interpretations of other cultures. While some lecturers reported a broad use of diverse cultural materials, others indicated a more conservative approach, often adhering to traditional sources. A notable trend among the participants was the reliance on translated materials, primarily those translated by Arab scholars. However, few lecturers acknowledged or critically assessed the potential biases or personal influences that these translators might introduce. The issue of translator bias is crucial, as it may shape the way foreign cultural content is interpreted and presented to students, potentially leading to a skewed understanding of the original materials.

One of the recurring themes in the findings was the difficulty lecturers encounter when attempting to use or produce translated materials. Most participants admitted that they depend on pre-existing translations rather than undertaking the translation process themselves. This reliance on external translations introduces a vulnerability, as lecturers may unintentionally propagate misinterpretations or incomplete representations of foreign cultures. The participants acknowledged that this practice could contribute to misunderstandings or even conflicts within the classroom, especially when students encounter values or perspectives that contrast sharply with their own.

However, despite these challenges, the majority of lecturers interviewed believed that their students benefit from studying cross-cultural issues. They emphasized that exposure to other cultures strengthens students' critical thinking and broadens their perspectives. Many participants argued that the integration of cross-cultural materials provides students with a comparative framework, allowing them to better appreciate and understand both their own culture and those of others. This comparative learning is seen as essential for fostering intellectual growth and intercultural competence, particularly in the context of postgraduate education.

Regarding the practical aspects of translating teaching materials and incorporating them into classroom activities, the lecturers generally expressed uncertainty. They acknowledged the

difficulty of translating materials and, in many cases, seemed unaware of the risks associated with using translated content without scrutinizing the quality or accuracy of the translations. Furthermore, none of the interviewees referred to the potential benefits of employing translation technologies or other methods to assist in the translation process. This lack of awareness reflects a gap in the lecturers' understanding of how modern tools, such as machine translation or specialized translation software, could facilitate the incorporation of cross-cultural materials in their teaching.

Additionally, when asked about the practice of assigning students reading materials in foreign languages and encouraging them to translate these texts into their native language, the lecturers indicated that this was not a priority. While they supported the idea of students being exposed to other cultures, this exposure was generally limited to secondary materials—such as texts already translated into Arabic—rather than encouraging direct engagement with foreign language texts. This approach suggests a somewhat passive stance toward cross-cultural education, where lecturers support the concept of cultural awareness but do not actively promote linguistic engagement with foreign sources.

In conclusion, the findings illustrate that while there is a general consensus among lecturers on the importance of cross-cultural education, there remain significant challenges in the practical implementation of these ideas. The reliance on pre-translated materials, lack of awareness regarding translation risks, and limited engagement with translation technologies all point to areas where further development is needed. In addition, the concerns about the potential negative influence of foreign cultural values on students reflect a deeper tension between the desire to foster global awareness and the need to preserve local cultural integrity. To overcome these challenges, more robust strategies for incorporating cross-cultural content, alongside improved translation practices and technological integration, will be essential in enhancing the quality of cross-cultural education in postgraduate programs.

Conclusion

This study underscores the critical importance of carefully selecting and incorporating appropriate teaching materials, particularly in the context of higher education within the field of social studies. It reaffirms the need to integrate cross-cultural content into postgraduate curricula, workshops, and activities, ensuring that students are not only exposed to diverse perspectives but are also equipped with the skills to engage positively in cross-cultural interactions. By focusing on the translation of foreign cultural materials, this research highlights how lecturers can enhance their own teaching performance and enable their students to navigate cross-cultural encounters more effectively.

A key finding of this study is the importance of including translated teaching materials rather than relying solely on resources from monocultural sources or those written exclusively in the lecturers' and students' native language. Limiting educational content to a single cultural viewpoint restricts

students' ability to critically analyze and interact with the global community. The need for students to gain confidence in cross-cultural settings, such as international conferences and academic collaborations, is evident. This study provides a thorough exploration of whether Libyan postgraduate students receive adequate exposure to diverse cultural experiences, and whether this exposure enhances their interaction skills in international contexts. The analysis confirms that while some progress has been made, many students and lecturers remain confined to materials rooted in their own cultural background, which limits their ability to fully engage in cross-cultural discourse.

The assumption that lecturers in Libyan higher education rely predominantly on materials from their own cultural sphere has been scrutinized in this research. It has been shown that many educators do not actively incorporate the experiences and perspectives of other cultures into their teaching, which may hinder their students' development in an increasingly globalized academic environment. To address this gap, the study advocates for a more dynamic and inclusive approach to teaching in the social sciences. Lecturers should diversify their teaching materials by incorporating knowledge from various cultures and adopting pedagogical methods that foster cross-cultural competencies in their students.

While the study has primarily concentrated on social and linguistic studies, the findings and recommendations are applicable to a broader range of disciplines. One of the key recommendations is that lecturers should rely more on materials written by native speakers of the cultures they wish to include in their teachings, rather than on secondary translations. This approach would provide more authentic insights into those cultures, helping to avoid the distortions that may occur when cultural materials are filtered through translators who may not fully grasp the nuances of the original context.

Furthermore, the study emphasizes the importance of lecturers developing their translation skills and leveraging available technologies to assist in this process. The use of tools like Google Translate can be beneficial, but lecturers should not rely solely on automated translations, as these can introduce errors or misinterpretations. Instead, lecturers should be trained to use these technologies as a starting point, applying their own knowledge and expertise to refine translations and ensure their accuracy and relevance. This will not only reduce the risks of misrepresenting foreign cultures but will also improve the quality of discourse in both written and spoken forms, particularly in international academic and professional settings.

In conclusion, this research advocates for the incorporation of cross-cultural teaching materials in postgraduate education, particularly in the social sciences. Lecturers should take an active role in selecting and translating materials from diverse cultural sources, ensuring that their students are exposed to a wide range of perspectives. Additionally, lecturers should familiarize themselves with translation technologies, enabling them to create accurate and culturally sensitive translations that enrich their students' learning experience. Ultimately, the integration of cross-cultural content into teaching practices will better prepare students for global interactions and contribute to their overall academic and professional success.

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Appendix

Questions

1. How do you divide your teaching materials? Old, new, include other cultures?
2. Is deciding you're your teaching material a difficult process?
3. Do you include materials from other cultures?
4. Why?
5. How do you translate?
6. Do you feel that your students are stronger when they study other cultures issues?
7. Are their activities to compare other cultures with students' culture?
8. Have you ever tried to translate other cultural value to include in your teaching? Have you tried to translate your teaching materials, and have you used technologies for example?
9. Have you asked your students to translate materials about other cultures values, and whether they have enough exposure to other cultures?
10. In their assignments, do they include other cultures in their discussion?
11. What method of translation do they use?