



International Conference

The Future of Education

**Multicultural Literature: an  
Innovative Tool to Enhance  
Business Students'  
Intercultural Communicative  
Competence  
Dorsaf Ben Malek  
Higher Institute of  
Technological Studies,**

- **What is intercultural communicative competence (ICC)?**
- **Why is ICC necessary to business English teaching?**
- **How can multicultural literature enhance business students' ICC?**

**What is intercultural  
communicative competence  
(ICC)?**

# Intercultural Communicative Competence

- **Knowledge: of elements and products in other cultures.**
- **Skills: of discovery and interaction & of interpreting and relating.**
- **Attitudes: Be open to all cultures & Respect all other cultures.**
- **Critical Cultural Awareness**

**(Byram, 1997)**

**Why is intercultural  
communicative competence  
necessary to business  
English teaching?**





## **Change in the workplace:**

- **Multicultural**
  - **Diverse**
  - **New identities**
- (Risager, 2006)**



**More  
international  
business and  
cooperation**

**WHERE WE WORK**





**ICC**

**Company**

**What happens if a company lacks  
intercultural communicative  
competence?**



Bankruptcy

NEXT EXIT

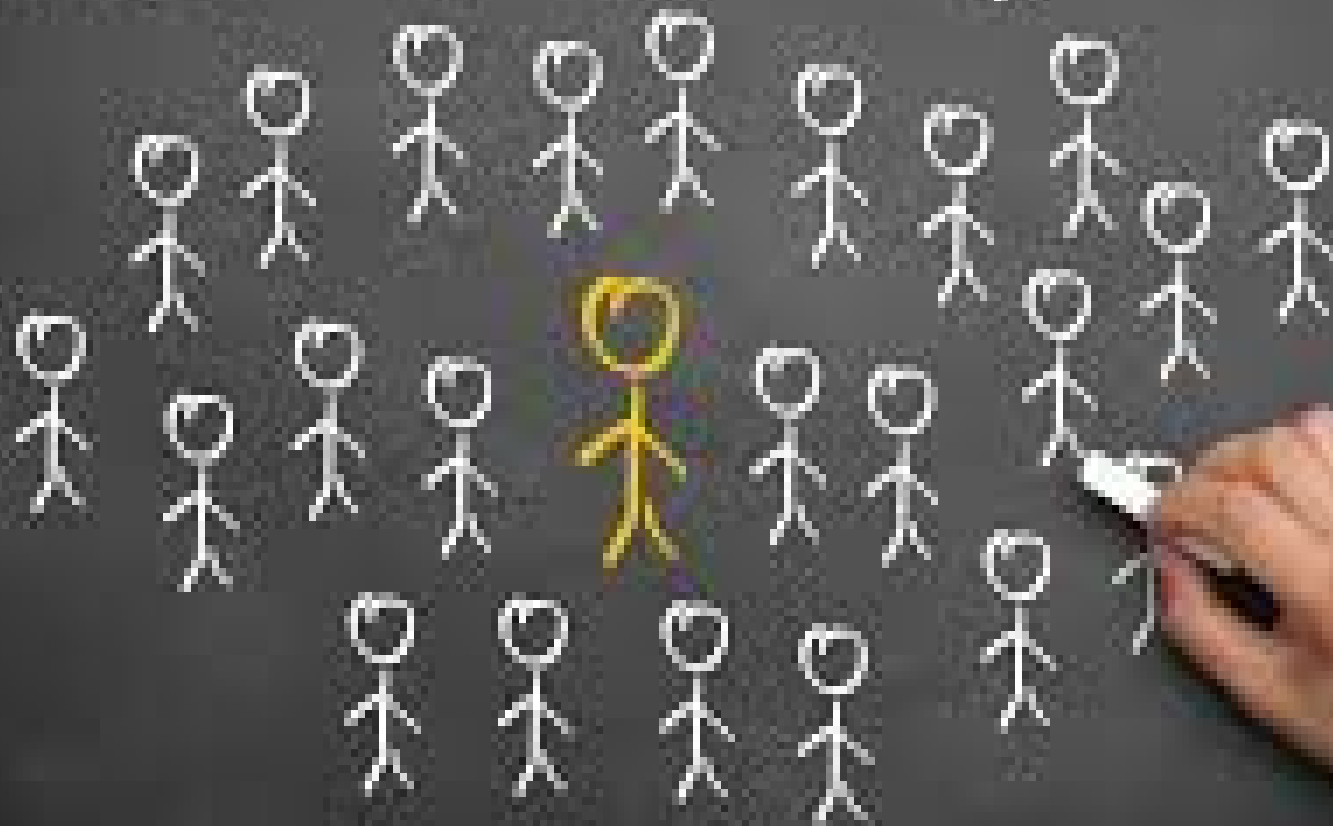


# **Business students' future employability**



**I NEED A JOB**

# We want you!





Hire me  
Most Educated

Hire me  
Most  
Experienced



**Successful candidates  
are:**

✓ **Knowledgeable**

**Culture knowledge**

**Business knowledge**

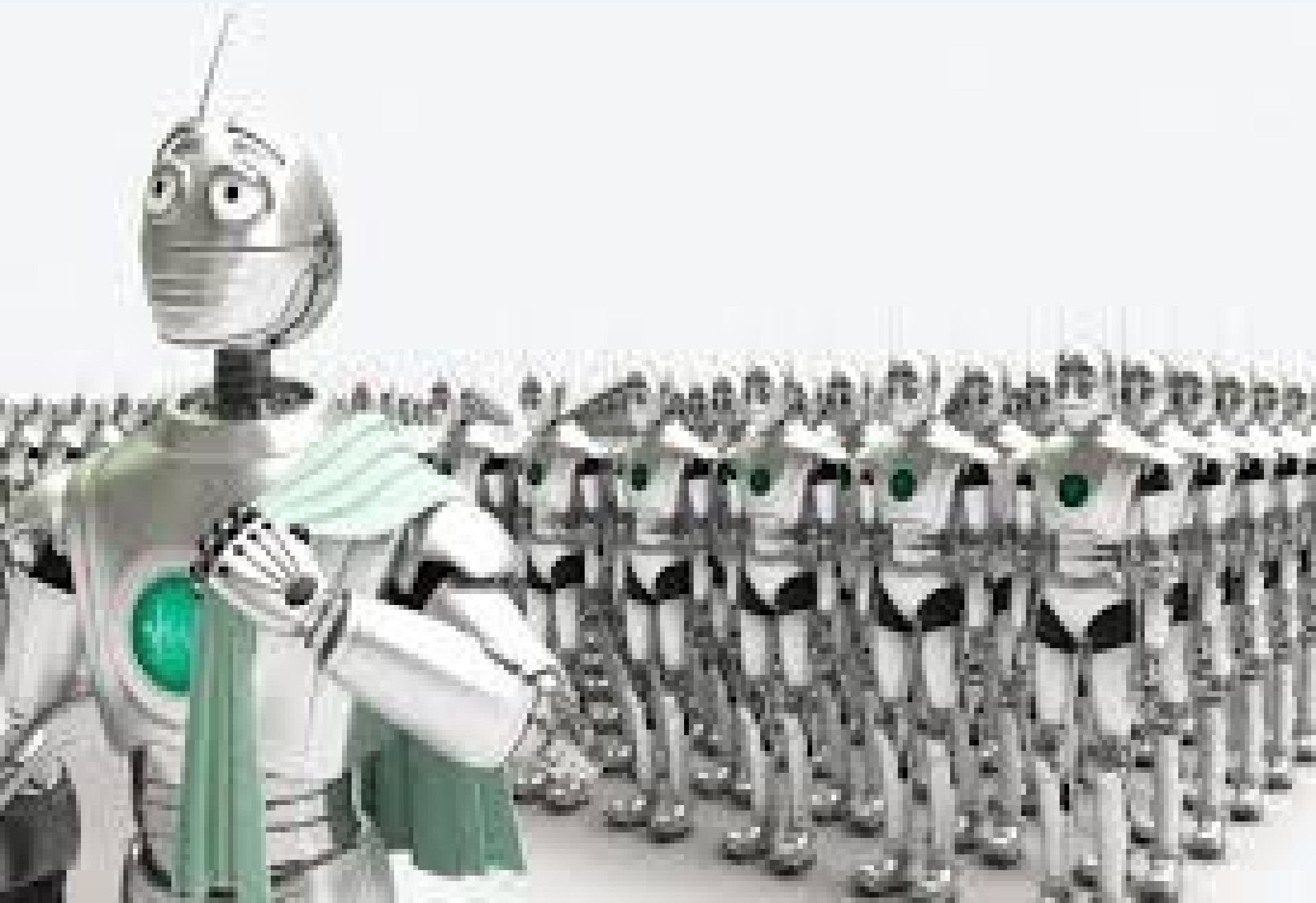
✓ **Skilfull**

**Language skills**

**Business skills**

**(Liu, 2013)**





**Students are not robots ready to enter the business world. They are human beings and part of living societies. Take the example of Tunisian students. They went through:**

THE FUTURE IS IN **OUR HANDS!**

# TUNISIAN REVOLUTION

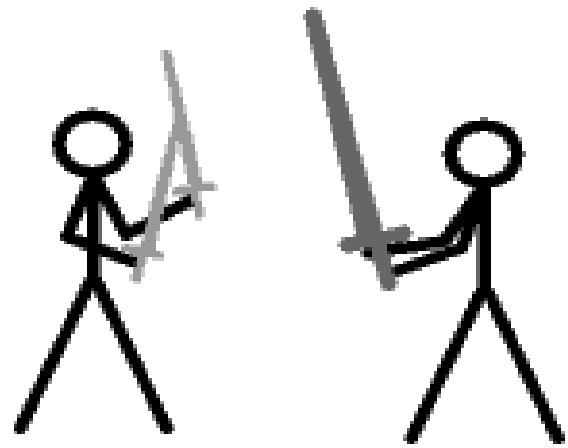




**HATE**  
speech.



"Stay quiet and you'll be okay."  
- Mohammed Atta 9/11/01





**Intercultural communicative competence may change youth's attitudes towards other cultures (Huber & Reynolds, 2014).**

- **Tunisian society is mono-cultural.**
- **Intercultural encounters are very rare in the educational context.**
- **Absence of the right methods and pedagogy**
- **Shortage of textbooks that deal with intercultural communication.**
- **Focus on the linguistic side of language teaching.**





Teacher

**How can teachers enhance  
their students' intercultural  
communicative competence?**

# **Teachers can use:**

**films**

**drama**

**simulation**

**documentaries**

**creative writing**

**telecollaborative  
partnerships**

**ethnographic  
tasks**

**multicultural  
literature**

**When a material is «transported from its context of origin, and presented to different learner groups it becomes an example of intercultural encounter» (Dogancay-Aktuna, 2005-100).**

## **Multicultural Literature**

- Produced by people from other cultures
- Authentic material
- A mirror of other cultures
- It speaks of other experiences

**(L.Henderson & Young, 2011)**



UTOPIA





I HAVE A DREAM



# Short Stories



# **The Short Story:**

**By being short, brief  
and concise, it helps  
students learn  
autonomously and  
independently (Rocha  
Erkaya, 2005)**

**How can multicultural  
literature enhance  
business students'  
intercultural  
communicative competence?**

# **Research Design**

- **No fixed attainable goal in ICC proficiency +  
No perfect intercultural speaker**
- **ICC components cannot be entirely measured  
in a quantitative way**
- **Qualitative methods are advisable for the  
evaluation and the assessment of ICC  
proficiency**

**(Byram, 1997)**

# **Course Design**

- **Students read the short story.**
- **They answer the teacher's guiding questions**
- **They prepare for presentations in groups**
- **They students reflect on the experience in journals**
- **Discussions take place**
- **They deliver presentations**

# **Selection Criteria of the short stories**

- **Vocabulary**
- **Students' orientation**
- **Intercultural themes**

Women  
Writers  
Texts and Contexts

# "Everyday Use"

ALICE WALKER



Edited  
and with an  
introduction by  
BARBARA T.  
CHRISTIAN



# **Part i c i p a n t s:**

- ❑ **20 MA business students of Higher Institute of Technological Studies, Charguia.**
- ❑ **Aged 21 to 32.**
- ❑ **Reluctant to read literature.**



# **Data Collection Instruments:**

- **Classroom observations: presentations and discussions**
- **Journals**
- **Semi-structured Interviews**

# Findings

## Intercultural Communication

- **Knowledge** : Cultural heritage
  - Culture-specific products
- **Skills**
  - **Skills of discovery and Interaction:**

### Mechanisms of Interaction

- Differences in greetings
- **Skills of Interpreting and Relating:**

# Reading the Short Stories

- **Short**
- **Familiar vocabulary**
- **Students related to characters**

# Inquiry-based Learning

- **Students enjoyed learning**
- **Students became independent and autonomous learners**

# **Concl usi ons**

**i) Focus on the tree fundamental aspects of ICC when dealing with multicultural literature may be a systematic planned guideline for the teacher.**

## **Concl usi ons**

**ii) By exploiting the cultural elements in relevance to business, instructors may provide students with a rich and motivating material.**

# **Concl usi ons**

**iii) By turning students into independent readers and autonomous learners, the short story is a motivating instrument for them to read literature.**

# **Concl usi ons**

**iv) Engaging students in inquiry-based learning makes them feel responsible for their own learning.**



# **Li m i t a t i o n s**

- **In relation to ICC:**
- **Other factors may determine behaviour**
- **Cultural dimensions exist as a continuum especially with globalisation and internet connection.**

- **In relation to reading the short stories:**
  - **Not having the habit of reading literature**
  - **Some unfamiliar vocabulary**
  - **Some unfamiliar cultural elements**
  - **Changing the timing may change the results**
  - **Not pure business short stories**

- **In relation to IBL:**
  - **Not knowing each other previously**
  - **Strong Vs weak students**

# References

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- Dogancay-Aktuna, S. (2005). Intercultural communication in English language teacher education. *ELT Journal* Volume 59/2. Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp 99 – 107.
- François Marcel, M. (2011), *Intercultural Competence Will Save the Day*. Global Diversity

**THANK YOU**

**GRACIAS**

**ARIGATO**

**SHUKURIA**

**JUSPAXAR**

**GOZAIMASHITA**

**EFCHARISTO**

**KOMAPSUMNIDA**

**GRAZIE**

**MEHRBANI**

**PALDIES**

**BOLZIN**

**MERCI**

**DANKSCHEEN**

**TASHAKKUR ATU**

**YAQHANYELAY**

**SUKSAMA**

**EKHMET**

**TINGKI**

**BIYAN**

**SHUKRIA**