



7th International Conference on Intercultural Education “Education, Health and ICT for a Transcultural World”, EDUHEM 2016, 15-17 June 2016, Almeria, Spain

## ICT-based Visualization for Language and Culture Mediation Skills Training: Addressing Societal Needs

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### Abstract

The paper explores the potential of ICT-based visual resources for developing non-language students' skills in the area of language and culture mediation in domain specific area. The legal administrative settings are taken as an example. The paper integrates the previous research findings regarding the visualization role in education and latest developments in the field under study. The research framework maps the concepts of visualization and cross-cultural mediation within the educational environment that is supposed to meet the multicultural society needs and challenges.

The paper highlights qualitative analysis findings regarding the students' use of visual resources with the view to their academic progress and professional development.

The paper argues the ICT-based visualization in training language and culture mediation skills could facilitate information processing and domain specific knowledge acquisition in a foreign language. The relevant resources use could enhance students' professional background, their abilities to meet the labor market requirements regarding applied and research-focused task. The paper provides the relevant literature analysis, a detailed description of the research methodology, and commentary students' pilot training outcomes, including the data of cluster and factor types of analysis and students' survey results.

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Peer-review under responsibility of the organizing committee of EDUHEM 2016.

**Keywords:** Knowledge representation, information processing, visualization

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## 1. Introduction

Imagination has been a driving force for knowledge representation and dissemination through centuries. Currently, the contemporary society uses diverse digital technologies to support information processing and structuring by visualizing key knowledge slots. Visualization is viewed as an effective communicative tool as it helps to identify complex concepts key elements, their semantic interaction, and lays grounds to a wider concept of modern communication as a process of knowledge representing through visual media tools.

The current tools of knowledge representing comprise concepts, notions, texts, figures, images, sounds, graphs, etc. that lay grounds to visual thinking in information processing.

The development of the digital societies has led to digital multimedia nature of the communication, knowledge representation and processing. ICT-based knowledge representation has become a systemic part of specialists professional activities and individuals' everyday personal entertainment.

Due to the above cognitive studies have promoted the concept of visual thinking that means thinking through visual operations to explore the data (Arnheim 1969). Scholars agree that visual imagery interacts with already existing mental models, contributes to new modals shaping that, in turn lays grounds for reasoning and knowledge argumentation (Gottschling 2006, Tversky 2005).

Moreover, digital nature of information processing through community shared practices and experiences lays emphasis on the social nature of visualization, collaboration-based process of visual objects creation (Heer, Carpendale, Weaver, Isenberg 2008, Wattenberg, 2005).

Nonetheless, global multiculturalism development brings new challenges to visualization process and its outcomes due to potential uncertainty, specificity or difference of visual representations regarding various cultures perceptions and traditions (Bresciani, Eppler 2012, Skeels, Lee, Smith, Robertson 2010).

Scholars underline that while dealing with multicultural communities it is critical to think carefully of culturally sensitive visual objects as their visualization might break or foster multicultural communication (Wenger 1998).

The above trends laid grounds to the present research framework that integrates the concepts of visualization and cross-cultural mediation to address the societal needs within ICT-based the educational environment.

## 2. Research Framework

Contemporary multilingual and multi ethnical societies are facing challenges through their members' interaction due to the gaps regarding their individuals' different cognitive, cultural and behavioural patterns. Cross-cultural differences might lead to failures in service provision and professional collaboration (Friedman, Olekalns, and Oh 2011). Therefore, language and culture mediation skills training meets the societal needs related to fostering mutual understanding of multicultural community members. The mentioned skills turn out to be a critical aspect of the contemporary education within the multicultural society.

The above training goes beyond the task of tolerance and foreign language skills development, and implies the specific higher education goal to make students (as future specialists) competent in consistent mediation with different cultures representatives within various social settings and areas of professional activities.

The respective competence is getting a strong focus regarding the social and professional maturity of specialists whose professional expertise is supposed to go beyond the foreign language competence.

Scholars underline that visualization might enhance learning capacity through multimodal education process within digital society (Hayes 2013, Klatzky et al 2008).

Scholars view visualization as an effective tool to shape augmented reasoning for context-based learning (Iwata, Houlsby, Ghahramani 2013, Poldrack, Desmond, Glover, Gabrieli 1998, Vogel, Sary, Dupont, Orban 2002). Current research findings have proved that visualization plays an important part in cognitive activities and learning practices (Alves 2003). There are papers regarding visualization as an instrument for enhancing language learning strategies (Dörnyei, Ryan 2015) and translation practice (Kußmaul 2005).

The author of this paper has followed the above colleagues' approach and conducted an empirical research on visualization regarding a new domain that was specialized legal translation. The empirical analysis confirmed that systemic visualization in translators' training could put down the number of errors related to terminology use, syntax structure, and legal culture concepts (Atabekova 2016).

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