Professional Development as a Powerful Means to Enhance American Civilization
Teaching: Case of Master II Students at the University of Mostaganem

A Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the degree of Doctorat ès Sciences in Didactics of Literary and Civilization Texts

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It is stated that learning English helps learners have greater insights into the target culture. The purpose of research reported in this thesis is to provide a systematic account of the main emphases about American culture teaching. In today’s technology driven-world, professional development affirms that it can open-up channels of communication, assure collegiality among peers, help gain practical classroom ideas, and result in attaining higher levels of learning among the students. Being aware of the crucial role of culture as a fundamental element of English language education, a closer inspection of teaching American civilization in the Department of English at the University of Mostaganem reveals that such opportunities are not offered, which remains till present times covered in the traditional way and is described as being inadequate.

This work tends to explore the way American civilization is taught at this institution to 2nd year Master students and proposes an intervention that seeks to redress this situation through the implementation of professional development procedures that may enable instructors to reflect on their own behaviours and classroom practices, recommend some useful initiatives for developing cultural competencies in teachers, suggest applications of cultural information to classroom practices and to curriculum development, as well as better detect the learners’ motivations and expectations.

To gather convenient information, a case study is carried out based on a triangular approach encompassing questionnaires, interviews, classroom observations, and analysis of peer teaching appraisal forms. Results show that the integration of these procedures helped teachers better liaise with their learners, maintain high professional standards, and ameliorate their students’ academic deficits. Given their strengths, EFL teachers are then recommended to include these professional methods in their syllabuses and put them into action.
This study will be of some help for teachers to make possible changes, additions and deletions to the current syllabus. Furthermore, the revealed findings will be used as a framework for curriculum improvements at the University of Mostaganem.
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