Global Vision Learning, To Go!

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Abstract

Mobile learning has been defined as learning across multiple contexts, through social and content interactions, using personal electronic devices. In this paper, author and creative designer describe their experience developing and piloting an interactive digital book series. The name of the ebook series is "Business & career beyond frontiers". It aims to develop students' cultural intelligence and global vision using technology. The paper starts with the description of the project. Then, it continues elaborating on the particular university context where the project started. Later, phases and results of the project are explained. Throughout the paper, recommendations based on critical incidents are included.

Keywords: Global vision, interactive digital book, mobile learning.

1. Introduction

The way students learn in the 21st century is changing. Not only because students are different, but also, because their professional context has evolved. Globalization and technology have profound implications in student's expectations and needs.

Because of globalization, now individuals are frequently exposed to daily interaction and work with others from many different cultures [1]. Sometimes, this interaction is face-to-face, another times is virtual. Sometimes, this interaction is abroad, but other times, it happens at their home town. Nowadays, students realize globalization challenges are big. They also acknowledge that cross-cultural management and intercultural communication learning is needed. Therefore, they expect to be trained to perform effectively under circumstances of multiculturalism.

With billions of devices having mobile broadband internet connections in the world [2], professors can't underestimate the impact of mobile learning to teach students how to effectively interact and work in multicultural settings. It's true that interaction using mobile devices is not the same than in person. But it can be very useful. Students can quickly access data and opinions using mobile devices to achieve academic objectives. They can also initiate purposeful conversations with people geographically disperse and culturally different. Students can share information and content related to the class. They can also contrast and find suitable complement for their professor's lesson. With appropriate guidelines and challenging activities in and out of the classroom, mobile learning can be an ally for professors developing global vision in their students.

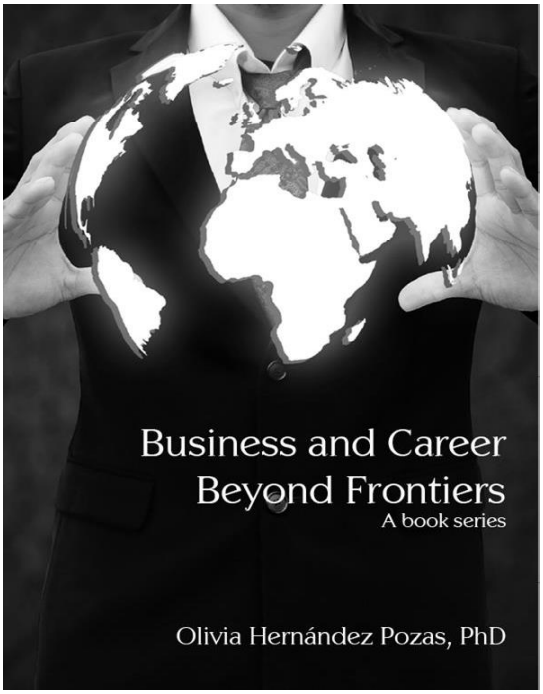
Proserpio & Gioia [3] state that since technological and social changes have important implications for teaching and learning, professors need to adapt, and explore new forms to engage with students in order to help them to better learn. Downey & Gray [4] explain that current students, frequently called digital natives, are skillful masters of technology and use social networking tools as a fundamental part of their academic and social lives. In addition, Tapscott quoted by Tadros [5], says that nowadays, students want to express their views and be widely heard. Students look for freedom in everything they do, they love to customize, they want entertainment in education, they like to collaborate and have a need for speed. So, how can professors capitalize the technological skills and the motivation for learning about multicultural topics that students have? Can professors engage students with the class content using mobile learning? How can professors create challenging and fun activities, to develop cultural intelligence in their students, using technology?

In this paper, author and creative designer describe their experience developing and piloting an interactive digital book series. The name of the ebook series is "Business & career beyond frontiers".

2. The Project

2.1 Description of the Project

"Business & career beyond frontiers", an interactive ebook series, aims to develop global competencies, such as global vision and cultural intelligence, using mobile learning. These ebooks are brief and focused, organized by topics. They are apps that students can download. Each ebook included in the series is based on pedagogical principles and theoretical frameworks. Experiential learning theory [6], social learning theory [7] and managerial principles serve as the foundation of the ebook series. The series cover main topics of the fields of Cross-cultural Management and Intercultural Communication. Specific topics are cultural intelligence, cultural dimensions, diversity, negotiation, conflict management, global leadership and global virtual teams.



One of the most important features of the ebook series is that it enables readers to interact using social media platforms. Social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, a blog and You Tube serve to extend interaction with content. Also to access related links, blog articles, news, recommended apps, videos, podcasts, infographics and reports. In and out the classroom, students can enhance their critical thinking about current international events posted on social media. They can make an informed opinion and support it with data and rationale they found navigating on internet. This is a wonderful opportunity to talk with them about reliable and not so much reliable sources of information. Any of the ebooks can be used to apply theoretical frameworks in business related events, marketing campaigns, ethical dilemmas, international disputes and public speeches.

Since all ebooks of the series include activities with intercultural challenges, they help students to practice strategy and support business solutions using international data. "Business and career beyond frontiers" is also an excellent tool to connect students with other experts in the field. Content on social media is daily posted and therefore, dynamic. It comes from many different sources. So students can count on updated knowledge, recent events and current examples as part of the ebook content.

2.2 Context of the Project

The initial context of this project was Egade Business School of Tecnológico de Monterrey. The idea was originally conceived by the author with the purpose of developing global competencies in young master program students.

In 2013, when the project started, Tecnológico de Monterrey, was introducing its new educational model called Tec 21. The objective of this educational model is to develop leaders capable of finding solutions to the World's most important challenges and priorities. Tec 21 is founded on three main pillars: 1) Inspiring, updated and well connected professors, who use technology in their courses. 2) Challenging interactive learning experiences and 3) Flexibility in the curriculum. Thus, "Business & career beyond frontiers" responds to the purpose stated by Tec 21.

Aligned with Tec 21 is the Novus program. This ebook series has been supported by the 2013 Novus program. This program supports the implementation of innovative ideas of professors in Tecnológico de Monterrey. The author is a professor in this university.

Thus, "Business & career beyond frontiers" has been created within an institutional context of innovation, encouragement and support.

2.3 Project Phases

This project started small, as an ebook with content needed for students of a single class, at master's level. Later on, it grew and transformed. From one digital and interactive book, it was transformed to a series of ebooks, organized by

topics. From an ebook including abundant based content, with some interaction on social media, it changed to an ebook series with some based content on the book, and a growing dynamic content, using social media. From an ebook designed to cover material for only one class at master's level; it evolved to a series of ebooks that can be used in more than one course, and at different levels: undergraduate and master's. Since on-line engagement and interaction became one of the key elements of the initiative, a workbook with related activities and challenges was created and incorporated to the ebook series.

Following, a description of each project phase and their learned lessons are presented.

2.3.1 Learning about Educational Trends

Like any other important educational project, this started by studying the field, searching information and frequently reading. Readings were mostly about educational trends, technological solutions to current educational challenges and specialized literature about Cross-cultural management and Intercultural communication. Readings were crucial to trigger ideas. They frequently discussed topics such as changes in the profile of students and their new habits. Authors often explained why such changes occurred and why education needed to change in order to be able to better prepare students. Within the field of Cross-cultural management and Intercultural communication, researchers often stated the need of experiential learning. They elaborated on the imperative that students learn by doing. Students should be able to develop the ability to apply knowledge to real global and multicultural situations. Also, to make necessary adjustments when reality was not exactly as theory stated. In the literature review, educational researchers often concluded that professors needed to change too. Also, that professors needed to use different type of tools, different methodologies and different arrangements of learning spaces. Thus, the process of literature review in the field of Education and in the field of Cross-cultural management and Intercultural communication, triggered a brainstorming of ideas.

The learned lesson of this phase is that ideas can come from many different sources. Literature review is a very important one. So if other professors want to innovate in their classrooms, but at some point, feel short of ideas about how to start, the recommendation is to read about educational trends. Then, combine this reading with articles in their specific field of knowledge and connect the dots.

Next, the way the idea was developed is explained.

2.3.2 Developing the Idea

The idea started broad. The objective of the professor was to innovate in the classroom. Single elements were the following: technology, an ebook, social media platforms and content related to Cross-cultural Management and Intercultural communication. When the idea was initially developed, the professor didn't have a robust expertise in every single aspect that was needed. Professor's expertise was mostly related to the content of her class and methodologies to teach the content. But she didn't have enough expertise on technology, nor on social media, much less on how to make an ebook. She needed to learn new things. She needed to find a team member with that expertise, that could immediately contribute and with whom the professor could learn and work towards this objective. Later, the professor searched and found the right person. That's when creative designer is invited to collaborate.

More reading, few courses and teamwork with the creative designer allowed refinement of the idea. First decisions included the topics. Topics were crucial at the initial phase to give structure to the ebook. A benchmarking of interactive books, in the particular area of knowledge, helped to outline the first draft. Initial preferences about the image of the book, the tone of the narrative and the type of pictures were brainstormed at this stage. Even an idea about the potential title for the ebook was voiced.

Although later many things about the book changed, in this stage many lessons were learned. First, the importance of reflection and realization about what professor's current expertise is. Professors need to find out what they know and what they don't know and need to learn. Being a professor doesn't mean to know it all. Professors can learn from others to be better professors. The professor doesn't have to walk the journey of innovation alone. Finding the right people to walk the journey together is not only useful but fun. Application of principles of teamwork is the other key element and lesson of this stage. Good conversation and work with team members are crucial to innovate.

Following, elaboration about project resources is provided.

2.3.3 Evaluating and Getting the Resources

More research and more decisions were done in this phase. Priorities about design and content production in social media needed to be set to plan priorities and the supply of resources.

The professor decided to work with Twitter first, then with the blog, next with Facebook and at the end with You Tube. Twitter initiated because it is easy and quick to read, to search, to share and to maintain with relevant content. Many practitioners and professors in the field have a Twitter account. So the professor learning process and piloting of social media for academic purposes started with Twitter. Blog was second place. Once the professor was familiar with Twitter and how it was used by others, the next step was to create her own blog and produce her own content. She did what she learned to do. Facebook for academic purposes came third place. By that time, everything was easy. You Tube came at the end of the list. The reason is that the purpose of using You Tube was to produce her own videos. To do so, the professor needed more time to prepare better.

The project needed software for the creation of the ebook. The creative designer of the book recommended InDesign of Adobe for that purpose. She had experience using it and this let her work on the first draft right away. To better understand the software and the whole ebook design process, as well as, to update knowledge on the features of the software, creative designer and professor registered together in an InDesign workshop. It was offered in December, in The 2013 Educational Innovation Conference of Tecnológico de Monterrey. Ideas and communication about what could be done, and how much work and time it required sped up after the course. It was useful and great to receive such training.

Another resource the team needed was the computer to be used for the design process. An apple Pro was bought for the task. Its features allowed InDesign to work well. Project also needed pictures. Shutterstock was chosen for it.

The phase of getting familiar with resources and evaluating them helped the creative process of the team. Recommendation for professors is not to be worried about specifics at the beginning, they will be needed as the project evolves.

Next, an explanation of how the ebook was designed is presented.

2.3.4 Designing the Interactive Digital Book

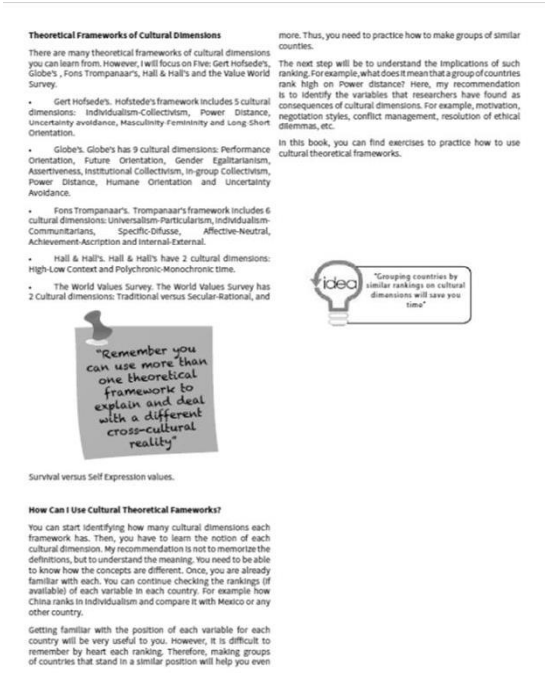
The design phase was guided by the structure of the book. Initially, the book was organized in 5 chapters. Later those chapters became a different ebook. Each of them represented a different topic. Main topics included the following: cultural intelligence; cultural dimensions; diversity and leadership; negotiation and conflict management, virtual teams and ethics and social responsibility in different cultures.

Since the beginning, social media was part of the project. Therefore, Twitter, Facebook, Blog, and You Tube accounts needed to be designed and exclusively devoted for academic and professional purposes. They needed to be prepared to extend the content of the ebook. The image of social media platforms needed to send the message of professionalism within the field of Cross-cultural management and Intercultural communication.

The format of the ebook series included, at the top of pages, four widgets to link with social media (Blog, Twitter, Facebook and You Tube). Links were included to foster interaction. Design of the pages had to be focused on the theoretical

content, examples and activities. On certain pages, the image of a post-it is included to mention important things to remember. In addition, an image of a light bulb represents ideas of how to apply the theory. Special links to web pages, podcasts and videos are also included.

In this phase, the team also decided about orientation of the page, size of letters, images and pictures, colors and, fonts.



Theoretical Frameworks of Cultural Dimensions

There are many theoretical frameworks of cultural dimensions you can learn from. However, I will focus on Five: Gert Hofsede's, Globe's , Fons Trompanaar's, Hall & Hall's and the Value World Survey.

- Gert Hofsede's. Hofstede's framework includes 5 cultural dimensions: Individualism-Collectivism, Power Distance, Uncertainty avoidance, Masculinity-Femininity and Long-Short Orientation.
- Globe's. Globe's has 9 cultural dimensions: Performance Orientation, Future Orientation, Gender Egalitarianism, Assertiveness, Institutional Collectivism, In-group Collectivism, Power Distance, Humane Orientation and Uncertainty Avoidance.
- Fons Trompanaar's. Trompanaar's framework includes 6 cultural dimensions: Universalism-Particularism, Individualism-Communitarians, Specific-Difusse, Affective-Neutral, Achievement-Ascription and Internal-External.
- Hall & Hall's. Hall & Hall's have 2 cultural dimensions: High-Low Context and Polychronic-Monochronic time.
- The World Values Survey. The World Values Survey has 2 Cultural dimensions: Traditional versus Secular-Rational, and Survival versus Self Expression values.

"Remember you can use more than one theoretical framework to explain and deal with a different cross-cultural reality"

How Can I Use Cultural Theoretical Fameworks?

You can start identifying how many cultural dimensions each framework has. Then, you have to learn the notion of each cultural dimension. My recommendation is not to memorize the definitions, but to understand the meaning. You need to be able to know how the concepts are different. Once, you are already familiar with each. You can continue checking the rankings (if available) of each variable in each country. For example how China ranks in Individualism and compare it with Mexico or any other country.

Getting familiar with the position of each variable for each country will be very useful to you. However, it is difficult to remember by heart each ranking. Therefore, making groups of countries that stand in a similar position will help you even more. Thus, you need to practice how to make groups of similar countries.

The next step will be to understand the implications of such ranking. For example, what does it mean that a group of countries rank high on Power distance? Here, my recommendation is to identify the variables that researchers have found as consequences of cultural dimensions. For example, motivation, negotiation styles, conflict management, resolution of ethical dilemmas, etc.

In this book, you can find exercises to practice how to use cultural theoretical frameworks.

idea "Grouping countries by similar rankings on cultural dimensions will save you time"

Since the professor wasn't a specialist in design, like the creative designer is, the whole designing process for her was new. For the professor the lesson of this phase is that designing can be fun and useful. She realized that there is so much to learn about best practices on how to present content in an appealing way. As a consequence, the professor now is more conscious of how her content is presented and she is now using best practices in her class and training presentations.

In the following section, processes of writing, proofreading and editing are explained.

2.3.5 Writing, Proofreading and Editing the Content

While the creative designer was working on InDesign to make the ebooks look nice, the professor was doing literature review and collecting information to include as theoretical frameworks and examples in each.

Later, it was the time to start writing content and to create the activities for practice. At this stage, finding a variety of good and updated sources of information, such as academic articles with robust theoretical frameworks was crucial. Contrasting different theories and practical models was equally important. Editing and proofreading, after the writing phase, were inevitable.

The main lesson in this phase is that writing takes time. Finding a quiet place to write helps. To write well, professors need to devote time and be focused. Writing is also a creative process and it can't be rushed.

Next, the process of piloting and making adjustments is outlined.

2.3.6 Running the Pilot & Making Adjustments

Piloting the initiative was very useful. Many times professor and creative designer had to test the ebooks. Since the documents were electronic, piloting was easy. Every course and every term served to do so. After every test, several things had to be changed. Improvement was always an ongoing process.

One of the first things that needed change was the title of the book. The initial title of the book changed a few months after it was suggested. The reason was that doing the first benchmarking, the professor found other books with similar names. Later, "Business and career beyond frontiers" was decided as the final name for the book series.

The programming on InDesign did not work well at the beginning. It was nicely shown on the computer, but did not worked well on other devices. Problems with format and compatibility among devices were evident. Various trial and error were conducted, until it finally worked well. Reading technical specifications during the whole process was needed.

Guidelines and rules about the way to upload digital books on the Apple store and Play store pushed professor and creative designer to make decisions about how to structure the book. The license that allows authors to upload books on digital stores is less expensive when one develops more than one book.

Many adjustments were also needed in regards to content and activities. Theoretical frameworks were explained in an easier way and tested at class. At that time, students didn't seem to have

difficulties to understand theory. However, the real challenge was for them to apply the frameworks. Several activities were tested, corrected and tested again. Timing and instructions were piloted and improved.

Curriculum changes in master programs occurred while creating the ebook. So, in the middle of the creation process, there was a need to rethink the structure of the book and study solutions to keep the content and the core of the idea. The solution came out to be an even better option than the one the team initially thought. The solution was to publish and distribute each chapter separately. This is the moment when the idea of creating an ebook series, instead of just one ebook was conceived. This series would include several thin ebooks with activities included in each, instead of only one thick ebook. Brief ebooks can be sold easily and can be distributed in more than one course. This way, different courses at different levels can use different content.

Flipping the Classroom
Activity 2

INSTRUCTIONS

From the following scenario, answer each question in one page. Just one page!
You can use diagrams, graphs, charts, process flows, logical algorithms any technique you know of to represent your business solution (infographics). You are free to add any information that you consider relevant to your solution and is not specified in the question, just tell me what you are assuming. People should be able to understand it by just looking at it! Make it look attractive and professional. Make sure you back up your strategy with theoretical frameworks. The more you use to support your ideas, the better. Do not forget to note your sources.

MANUFACTURING/QUALITY/PROCESSES

Imagine you are the head of the Manufacturing department of a Mexican company. You have been assigned the task of implementing a new quality Japanese process in the plant.

- Explain the situation that may arise if the Mexican company were forced to adapt to the Japanese work culture? Provide solutions.

This book has also been piloted with trainers of cultural intelligence during a certification. Trainers welcomed the idea and the electronic format. They actually got very interested. When the professor showed them the ebook on a mobile, trainers called it a useful and attractive app. Thus, the idea to market it as an app is currently under revision.

Finally, a pilot example of the ebook series was shown to other three departments of Tecnológico de Monterrey: The Vicerectory of Internationalization, the International Program office and the academic department of communication in Monterrey. Feedback from all of them was very positive. Opportunities to use the ebook series in an undergraduate course was given. During the semester August-December 2014, the ebook was piloted in the Intercultural communication course in addition to the pilot tests often conducted at master's level.

The lesson at this phase is that piloting is crucial to test the innovative tool. One might think the idea is going to work just fine, but it isn't until students use it that the real applicability shows up. So the recommendation to other professors is never skip the piloting phase. Not only failure can be prevented by piloting, but also, much better ideas can emerge.

In the following section, capitalization of this project is suggested.

2.3.7 Sharing the Idea and Using the Ebook series: Capitalization

This project started a year ago, just as an interactive ebook. Currently it is been produced as an ebook series (app) and is about to be sold in the Play store. It started as an innovate idea for a single course. Now, it has the opportunity to impact several undergraduate and master courses, hopefully in more than one campus. When all this started its social media accounts started from scratch. Professor's blog has now 16 published articles and people are asking for more content. The ebook series is not yet available on the Play store and its Twitter account has already 416 followers, Facebook has 240 likes and numbers keep on growing. Preliminary results of the project look promising.

The expectation of the potential impact has really grown. In spite of the fact that the journey has not been easy, the learning, opportunities and satisfaction have been huge. The objective of telling others the story of "Business & career beyond frontiers" is to motivate other professors to innovate. It can be another ebook series like this, or it can be social media for academic purposes, or it can be flipped classroom activities like the ones the book includes. It all depends on the professor. The idea is to help students to learn better with innovative

educational solutions, capable of engaging them with academic content.

2.8 Jumping to the Next Level: Future Plans

The next step for this project is personalized education to develop cultural intelligence and global vision. The social media platforms, as well as the ebook series serve as a based to do analytics about student learning processes. Hash tags on the social media posts allow students to select content related to their interests. More topics can be developed and distributed as ebooks. Assessments and surveys can be designed to understand better students' profiles and learning needs. More interaction may serve to understand students learning processes in a more effective way. Research can be done too.

3. Conclusions

The creation of the ebook series "Business & career beyond frontiers" has been a very satisfactory journey of educational innovation. When the project started, professor and creative designer expected to learn and professionally grow. However, the reality has been much better than the initial expectation. Educational innovation processes are highly recommended to others. Professors can improve their teaching and students always appreciate it. Process is fun and the journey is worth living.

4. Acknowledgements

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