

ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of online gaming platforms has created opportunities for intercultural communication among young people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Roblox, as one of the most popular social gaming platforms, enables English-mediated interactions that facilitate cultural exchange. However, limited studies have explored how Generation Z university students experience intercultural communication and develop intercultural sensitivity through authentic interactions on Roblox. Therefore, this study aimed to explore the intercultural experiences of Generation Z university students and examine the development of their intercultural sensitivity during English-mediated interactions on Roblox. This study employed a qualitative case study integrated with netnography involving six participants selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through non-participant observation and semi-structured interviews and analyzed using theory-driven thematic analysis. The findings revealed that participants developed intercultural experiences through cultural exchange, English-mediated communication, and intercultural friendships. They also demonstrated intercultural sensitivity through communication adaptation, openness, respect for cultural differences, positive cultural perceptions, and increased confidence in communicating with international users. This study concludes that Roblox provides an authentic digital environment that supports the development of intercultural communicative competence and intercultural sensitivity among Generation Z university students.