



NEW INNOVATIVE APPROACHES FOR TEACHING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT	KEYWORDS
<p>The article discusses the inseparability of culture and language, and suggests ways to implement educational strategies for teaching a second language through culture to improve students' linguistic understanding. People living in different regions of the world have different cultural backgrounds and speak different languages. Language and culture are formed at first glance as two separate areas, but they are interconnected and mutually influence each other. The appreciation of a language usually influences the culture associated with it, and cultural patterns of cognition and practices are often explicitly encoded in the language.</p>	<p>culture, language teaching, foreign language, culturally sensitive learning, strategy.</p>

The role and place of culture and cultural issues have always been challenging issues for teachers. Their attitude to the subject matter may be very different regarding the meaning of culture and the possibilities of incorporating cultural content into the language teaching process. These differences can be the result of their previous experience as language learners, of what they have learned along their training process, they have had to come into direct contact with the target culture. The cultural content can be influenced by the extent of differences between the native and target cultures. In teaching language, the emphasis is on the development of four language skills: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. Nevertheless, language teachers often refer to a fifth skill, which is culture. We cannot imagine language teaching without referring to the target culture; therefore, culture has always been present in the teaching process. But what does this skill imply and how should it be included in the teaching-learning process? In comparison to grammar or vocabulary, culture is more difficult to define; therefore, it is not clear what and how it should be taught. Nevertheless, we believe that some principles, recommendations, and practical ideas regarding the introduction of cultural content must be included in the curriculum of language teaching methodology. Teachers need to develop a theoretical and practical awareness of what culture means, a basic strategy to work with the cultural content, and in what forms it may be present in the language classroom.

Foreign language teachers are not looking forward to being experts in the theory of culture, but they have to be aware of what this term encompasses and especially what it means in the frames of foreign language teaching/learning. They should clearly understand that culture cannot be taught simply through a few explicit lessons about some specific customs, holidays, songs, or works of literature. It

is somehow a way of thinking, mentality, and upbringing that was genetically incorporated into humanity.

Language is not a group of random linguistic forms applied to a cultural reality that can be found outside of language, in the real world. As specified by Condon, culture can be defined as a way of life. Anyway, where people live, their behaviors and thoughts follow and are generally based on their own cultures. Culture has many different dimensions. It includes ideas, customs, skills, arts, and tools that characterize a group of people in a given period; it is also the beliefs, values, and material objects that create our way of life. Culture demonstrates a context of cognitive and affective behavior for each person. It influences individual estimation and attitudes, and can also affect practical aspects of life such as hobbies.

Culture is also a matter of habit that becomes tradition and tradition that gives rise to culture. Condon further explained that stereotypes assign group characteristics to individuals purely based on their cultural membership. Cultural formulas act on how people think, speak, act, and interact with one another. Samovar, Porter, and Jain stated that culture and communication are inseparable because culture not only dictates who talks to whom, about what, and how the communication proceeds: moreover, it helps to decide how people encode messages, the conditions, and circumstances under which various messages may or may not be sent, noticed, or interpreted. In short, culture is the foundation of communication.

We cannot understand the lives and motivations of others and connect with their concerns and interests without culture. Culture is specific in our being and a powerful human tool to develop our society, add to our knowledge and establish relationships between people. However, culture is fragile. The elements of culture are constantly changing and easily lost. Whether we do not value it, we will lose it eventually.

Culture can be defined as a learned system of values, beliefs, and norms among a group of people. Explanation of culture contains ethnic background, nationality, gender, disability, race, sexual orientation, and religion. Culture not only affects people's language and behaviors but also is important in achieving linguistic proficiency, and the culture of a society can be changed depending upon the language used. For instance, some old words remain even when they are no longer used culturally. New words come out as they become identified with particular cultural activities. For example: Afrofuturism - a cultural movement that uses the frame of science fiction and fantasy to reimagine the history of the African diaspora and to invoke a vision of a technically advanced and generally hopeful future in which Black people thrive: this movement is expressed through art, cinema, literature, music, fashion, etc... The slang words passed on our parents were very likely different from those we use today. For example: Nice - This word used to mean "silly, foolish, simple" Far from the compliment it is today. Different eras often have differing "pop languages". These languages are most likely to be influenced by TV programs, politics, or music, and little by little they create their cultural trend. Models of this can be seen with the Beatles and most recently in Hop Pop music. Language is always cultural in some respects. Language should be conceptualized and integrated as part of a society and its culture.

Students can not manage a new language until they have managed the cultural context in which the new language take place. This means that comprehension a new culture is an important element in achieving success in foreign language acquisition. The language and the culture learning can be compared with a child's first experiences with the family into which he/she is born, the community to

which he/she belongs, and the environment in which he/she lives. When we are children, we naturally obtain our first language because our society, our environment, and our culture constantly feed us. When we come into a new language, we also need to ingest the new culture's nutrients.

To be a foreign language or bilingual teacher, cultural perception and intercultural training are very important. If children are given cultural ken, immersed in a culturally rich environment, and revealed to culturally basic material, they may learn the foreign language with more ease because their background knowledge about the foreign-language culture will make comprehension less difficult.

As Lado mentions in his book *Linguistics across Cultures*, if certain elements of a foreign language differ greatly from the student's native language, that student is likely to encounter difficulties. It can be assumed from this that the learning of a foreign language is facilitated whenever there are similarities between that language and the learner's mother tongue because languages usually have differences in syntax, pronunciation, and structure. It is possibly by cultural promotion and conception that the varieties of languages can be resolved and students' learning stresses can be reduced. Foreign language learning implicates several different dimensions, counting grammatical competence, communicative competence, language proficiency, and cultural understanding. Teaching a foreign language is not simply about giving speeches about syntactic structures or learning new vocabulary, but should incorporate cultural elements. Cultural activities and objectives should be attentively organized and incorporated into foreign language lesson plans to enrich the teaching context content. Proposals for strategies to include cultural items in the foreign language classrooms are:

Provide Culturally Learning Materials

The use of proper substances can help students engage in real cultural experiences. These materials can include: films, news broadcasts, television shows, Web sites, magazines, newspapers, menus, and other printed matters. Teachers can adapt their use of cultural materials to suit the age and language proficiency level of the students.

Using Common Proverbs as Transferred Tool

A debate of common proverbs in the foreign language can help students to understand how the proverbs are different from or similar to proverbs in their mother tongues. This can help them to understand how differences might underscore the historical and cultural background of a country. Using proverbs as a transferred tool to investigate two different cultures can guide students to decompose the similarities and dissimilarities of cultures.

Apply the Role Play as Sociocultural Approach

Role play is also a useful instructional technique in a sociocultural approach. Role-play activities can examine cultural behavior and patterns of communication. For example, in one of these roleplays, students can dramatize an incident that happened to them and caused cross-cultural misunderstanding. Like so, it will allow them to develop communicative strategies to overcome similar problems in real foreign language communication.

Stimulate Students Search and Present through the Culture Capsules

The usage of culture capsules is one of the best-established and best-known methods for teaching culture. Cultural capsules is a short description of some aspects of the target language culture alongside

contrasting information from the students' native language cultures. The going against information can be provided by the teacher, but it is usually more effective to have the students themselves point out the contrasts. Students can present objects or images that originate from the target culture. The students are then supervised for finding information about the item in question, either by conducting research or by being given clues to investigate. They can either write a summary or make an oral presentation to the class about the cultural signification of the item.

View Students as Cultural Resources

Formerly, foreign language classrooms are more culturally and ethnically diverse than they have ever been. Teachers can utilize the resources this provides. Teachers can invite international students into the classroom as expert sources to present aspects of their own cultures. In this learning activity, students not only learn the diversity of cultures but also have opportunities to organize and make connections between their native culture and target language culture through these presentations.

Computer Technology Help Students Gain Cultural Information

Pedagogues indicate that the current computer technology has many advantages for foreign language and cultural learning. A computer and its attached language learning programs can provide foreign language learners with more independence in the classrooms and allow learners the option of working on their learning materials at any time of the day. Thanks to computers and the Internet, foreign language learners can link anywhere and at any time to access appropriate material and information on learning. The World Wide Web can provide momentary access to websites in other countries. Students can find resources written in the target language and learn about other countries cultures. Those websites contain a variety of topics including news, sports, entertainment, health, etc. They accommodate various cultural learning opportunities for students to pursue their cultural understanding and practice their reading and vocabulary skills.

The purpose of this article is to discuss the inseparable relation between culture and language. Cultural learning helps us to discover that there is a great variety of ways of viewing the world. Understanding the relationship between culture and linguistics will help us to develop instructional strategies and some methodology for teaching foreign languages. Language ability gradually becomes an essential skill in the information-driven world. Culture in language learning is not an expendable skill. To carry out the right linguistic comprehension, culture and language should be learned together. The more cultural concepts we learn, the more language abilities we gain; the more language we gain, the more competitiveness we have.

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