



«A CULTURAL ASPECT OF TEACHING ENGLISH»

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Abstract: Learning a foreign language requires a strong desire, a good memory, regular practice and also patience from the student. In fact, knowing a foreign language is based on certain factors like having a good teacher, being in a real English atmosphere, traveling, learning a new vocabulary, applying learned words to a daily life. These factors help students to learn the language faster, better and more perfectly. The most effective of learning of foreign language is studying the culture of Target Language.

Keywords: language, teaching, culture, English, communication, sociocultural, intercultural, learning.

Learning a foreign language requires a strong desire, a good memory, regular practice and also patience from the student. In fact, knowing a foreign language is based on certain factors like having a good teacher, being in a real English atmosphere, traveling, learning a new vocabulary, applying learned words to a daily life. These factors help students to learn the language faster, better and more perfectly. The most effective of learning of foreign language is studying the culture of Target Language. So Kramersch's keen observation should not go unnoticed: Culture in language learning is not an expendable fifth skill, tacked on, so to speak, to the teaching of speaking, listening, reading and writing. It is always in the background, right from day one, ready to unsettle the good language learners when they expect it least, making evident the limitations of their hard-won communicative competence, challenging their ability to make sense of the world around them. [1] Robert Lado explains the goal of learning a foreign language as "the ability to use it, understanding its meanings and connotations in terms of the target language and culture, and the ability to understand the speech and writing of natives of the target culture in terms of their meanings as well as their great ideas and achievements" [2] He argues that this goal involves both the need to understand what a native speaker means when s/he says something in a particular way, and the need to know what interpretation the native speaker will make when s/he hears something told in a particular way. What does understanding the culture give to learners? Understanding the culture of Target Language allows learners to use learned words correctly in both oral and written form and to use them effectively. If learners have more knowledge about sociocultural background, they will be able to learn new words easily, make effective use of expressions and also it will



change their ways of speaking. It helps students learn the Target Language more deeply. As well as, having more knowledge about the culture of Target Language builds the ability to use the right word depending on the context. Let's discover the branch Intercultural Communication as a goal of learning a foreign language. In the modern methodology of teaching foreign languages, the knowledge and process of mastering foreign language communicative activity qualifies as Intercultural Communication. [3] Learning a foreign language without understanding the culture is like eating a meal without salt. Even if a person who eats the meal without salt cannot feel himself or herself hungry, but, he or she cannot enjoy it. Speaking without understanding the essence of the culture of a foreign language is similar to the example mentioned above. There are some concepts that learners can apply very nicely in their native language. Even they can translate the concepts directly as word for word translation. However, it doesn't give an exact result they expect, it doesn't sound exactly like their native language, it doesn't give the meaning they want to express. That is why it is so important for learners to learn a foreign language through its culture. Let's see practical approach to teaching English through its culture. It's impossible to teach culture directly, because the aim isn't to teach culture as a subject, but to teach a foreign language making its culture one of tools. So food, holidays, clothing, time, music, money, traditional stories, religion, history, family and other topics can be cultural tools. Such themes are difficult to teach or explain without cultural background information. The following suggestions to teach might be helpful to young teachers or future teacher as me. Organizing a food fair is one of the best ways to teach the language beyond culture. A teacher can ask to cook or draw the traditional meals or food of English speaking countries for the next lesson. And students bring their creativities to the class. They can make dialogues, ask questions in their foreign language while they see, touch and practice the realia. Music festival can be motivation activity for learners of English. In today's life most of students have their favourite English singer. A teacher asks learners to create their lovely singers' images (if a student hasn't a favourite one, then s/he can choose) for the following lesson. In the class a teacher makes pupils speak about their images, even sing in English. The activity can improve their listening and speaking skills Money. It's good that most of teachers use ICT show foreign countries traditional items. On the other hand, permanent attraction of learners with ICT isn't sometimes possible. It's true that younger generation is fond of hi-techs, but using the same techniques can also be dreary. Instead, when theme is about money a teacher may bring models of bank





notes, coins or bills of English speaking countries which are parts of culture. Students have conversations, organize role plays, exchange or do any other activities. Tomalin and Stempleski, modified Seelye's "seven goals of cultural instruction", and listed the goals of teaching culture as follows:

1. To help students to develop an understanding of the fact that all people exhibit culturally-conditioned behaviours.
2. To help students to develop an understanding that social variables such as age, sex, social class, and place of residence influence the ways in which people speak and behave.
3. To help students to become more aware of conventional behaviour in common situations in the target culture.
4. To help students to increase their awareness of the cultural connotations of words and phrases in the target language.
5. To help students to develop the ability to evaluate and refine generalizations about the target culture, in terms of supporting evidence.
6. To help students to develop the necessary skills to locate and organize information about the target culture.
7. To stimulate students' intellectual curiosity about the target culture, and to encourage empathy towards its people. [4]

From all above, it is evident that, much as the element of culture has gained momentum in foreign language learning, most educators have seen it as yet another skill at the disposal of those who aspire to become conversant with the history and life of the target community rather than as an integral part of communicative competence and intercultural awareness at which every "educated individual" should aim. [5] Moreover, culture knowledge allows learners to think in another language. Culture is an essential thing when studying foreign languages. Because understanding cultural background-art, literature, lifestyle-helps students reach language proficiency and really live the language while they learn. [6] To sum up, culture is invisible tool to methodology of English teaching that facilitates and accelerate the process of English learning. Furthermore, it widens students' outlook by giving them chance to learn new practices, traditions, customs and lifestyles. If teachers take cultural issues into consideration while teaching, high results of learners can be expected.

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