

Ergasheva Aziza Erkin qizi
Gulistan state university, student

THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURE IN TEACHING ENGLISH IN EFL CLASSROOMS

Annotation: This article discusses how culture plays a significant part in learning foreign languages. Furthermore, notable scientists' perspectives on language and culture were researched and assessed.

Key words: Language and culture, dimensions, significant impact on, cultural background knowledge, cultural factors.

Defining the role of language demands a broad perspective. Language serves as a primary means of expression. We convey our sentiments, emotions, thoughts, needs, and desires through words, symbols, and gestures, all of which are called language. Culture refers to a group's traits, which include language, religion, cuisine, social behaviors, music, and art. What is the exact relationship between language and culture? This article strives to define the importance of teaching culture while teaching languages in non-English-speaking nations, as well as its key aspects.

Culture is a broad term that has been explored in the social sciences. The concept of culture can be viewed from various perspectives. The goal of including the following definitions of culture is to systematize and integrate the aspects of culture in FL education. A cultural phenomenon refers to tangible forms or structures that individual members of the culture utilize in various interactions in certain social situations and groups to express their values, attitudes, and beliefs. That is, culture has five dimensions: practices, products, viewpoints, people, and communities.

Language and culture compliment one another. According to Brooks (1964), language is central and essential to any society. It is used to engage with, describe, interpret, and respond to culture (Moran, 2001). It enables people within the cultural group to exchange ideas and information. It also serves as a cultural transmission method.

Language and culture are indispensable allies. A particular language conveys the entire message about a certain civilization. Culture is important in language instruction because it teaches us to adjust our use of English in order to learn about, comprehend, and respect the values, methods of doing things, and unique traits of different cultures.

Furthermore, culture can have a significant impact on learners' diverse abilities.

First and foremost, culture has the potential to dramatically boost learners' vocabularies. Language is a cultural expression, with vocabulary serving as the primary source. The cultural difference will undoubtedly be evident in the vocabulary, and the explanation of language will also reveal national or cultural distinctions.

Secondly, despite dedicating significant time to language acquisition, learners struggle to improve their listening comprehension skills. In order to improve this skill, they attempt any technique they come across. However, most of them fail due to a lack of cultural background knowledge of the language they have studied. It is indisputable that language learners encounter primarily the context of culture in listening, which they are rarely aware of.

To be more specific, consider our own experience: when we listen to something in which the events involved are known to us, regardless of their sort, we find it easier to understand. Even if there are some unfamiliar terminologies, the gist is easy to guess given the context. From the discussion above, we can see how important culture is to our listening capacity.

Speaking is another ability that can be developed through cultural exposure. Speaking involves more than just proper pronunciation and tone, as many people believe. To properly communicate with others, people must expand their cultural background knowledge. As a result, teachers should consider what materials to use while teaching languages, which mostly refers to real materials, allowing students to utilize good sentences in appropriate contexts.

Learning cultures can greatly enhance our reading skills. Although linguistic knowledge can have a significant impact on one's reading ability, cultural factors will always play a larger role in the reading process. Specifically, certain aspects of cultural texts can make it difficult for students to understand what they are reading. As a result, it serves as a reminder to pay more attention to the cultural context of reading than we previously did. Finally, the criteria described above demonstrate the importance of cultural awareness when educating EFL students.

Culture learning is a process of interpretation. Teaching cultural facts has helped learners understand foreign attitudes, values, and mindsets. Cultural education's goal is to help learners "understand why the speakers of two different languages act and react the way they do, whether in fictional texts or in social encounters, and what the consequences of these insights may mean for the learner." It is the process of learners interpreting and making meaning of their internal and external environments.

Culture cannot be taught in the same way that grammar is. Cultural teaching must emphasize "exploration and description," which differs from teaching grammar because the principles for constructing meanings are dynamic (Kramsch, 2003).

It's important to be cognizant of stereotypes, biases, and ethnocentrism when teaching FC. Stereotypes are unavoidable in cultural instruction. One of the goals is to encourage students to be sensitive to cultural stereotypes (Flewelling 1994). Stereotypes could be used to motivate students to study a foreign language (Dlaska, 2000).

When establishing a cultural syllabus, it's necessary to strike a balance and avoid bias. Additionally, it's important to be mindful of stereotypes of ethnocentrism.

The preceding explanation demonstrates that culture and language are inextricably linked, and it is impossible to separate them while ignoring the importance of either language or culture. In an EFL classroom, it is critical for students to be taught English in conjunction with the culture so that they can learn the target language and apply it in real life. As a result, teachers who want to build courses for EFL students and use them in the classroom should not neglect the role that culture plays in teaching and learning English.

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