

CULTURE UNDERSTANDING IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING**Xudaynazarova Muborak Baxtiyorovna**

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ANNOTATION

In the course of foreign language teaching, the priority should always be given to increase international understanding by enabling the students to enter into the life, thought, and literature of people who speak another language. The objective may vary from one period to another, but it should long be present in the thinking of our minds. The following words attempt to explore the importance of culture teaching and relevant activities so as to raise our awareness of the significance of culture understanding in our teaching.

Keywords: *Culture understanding, Culture teaching, Devices, Activity*

Cultural understanding has been a program, a vision, a chance of defining a new role for language teachers and the time has arrived when the social significance of this international cultural understanding is becoming more apparent. This inevitably raises the question as to what it is most important to mediate within the cultural dimension - in its new, broad interpretation. We all know that understanding a language involves not only knowledge of grammar, phonology and lexis but also a certain features and characteristics of the culture. In 1904, in his book *How to Teach Foreign Language*, Jespersen stated that “the highest purpose in the teaching of languages may perhaps be said to be the access to the best thoughts and institutions of a foreign nation, its literature, culture—in short, the spirit of the nation in the widest sense of the word.” It maybe well to ask ourselves whether such idealistic aims have been realized in practice, whether international understanding can be said to have been prompted by the considerable amount of language teaching in schools around the world. Realizing it or not, language teachers cannot avoid conveying impressions of another culture.

Culture is all pervasive and complex, which is reflected in every aspect of life. And obviously, language is the key to the cultural heritage of another people or that knowledge of another language enables individuals to increase their personal culture through contact with great minds and literatures. The culture of a people, in its broad sense, refers to all aspects of shared life in community. We growing up in a social group learn ways of looking at things, doing things, expressing things and solving certain problems in certain ways. We also learn to value something and despise or avoid other things. These attitudes, reactions and emotions become part of our ways of life without being conscious of them. Yet these culturally determined features actually have rooted in a deeper and more significant social conventions, relations and assumptions which are composed of the main stream of a culture of a people. A language is learned and used within such a context, drawing from the culture distinctive meanings and functions which must be assimilated by language learners if they are to control the languages as native speakers control it. In a country where there is one predominant culture, students will, as they grow up, react in a certain ways and value certain things. So their first encounter with a different set of behavior patterns may turn out to be a shock, causing them to consider the speakers of the language as offensive or rude. For instance, the friendly Chinese greeting “Where are you going?” may receive surprising refusal from people of foreign cultures. In a society where individuals must never admit what they are wearing is valuable or in good taste, the reply of “thank you” to a compliment may be considered an indication of a certain conceit, whereas it is the normal response to American. In every language, these situations may emerge to puzzle and perturb the monolingual students.

Culture teaching is a long and complex process concerning something more than language use itself. In doing the above activities, the aim is to increase students’ awareness and to develop their curiosity towards the target

culture and their own, helping them to make comparisons among cultures. The comparisons are not meant to underestimate any of the cultures being analyzed, but to enrich students' experience and to make them aware that although some culture elements are being globalized, there is still diversity among cultures. This diversity should then be understood, and never underestimated. Then where should we go and what to achieve in this field is the next important lesson to deal with. Several goals are thus proposed by Seelye in which student are supposed to demonstrate that they have acquired certain understandings, abilities, and attitudes: That they understand that people act the way they do because they are using the options the society allows for satisfying basic physical and psychological needs; That they understand that such social variables as age, sex, social class, and the place of residence affect the way people speak and behave; That they can demonstrate how people conventionally act in the most common mundane and crisis situations in the target language; That they are able to evaluate the relative strength of a generality concerning the target culture in terms of the amount of evidence substantiating the statement; That they have developed the skills needed to locate and organize material about the target culture from the library, mass media, and personal observation; That they possess the curiosity about the target culture and empathy toward its people. It goes without saying that foreign language teachers should be foreign culture teachers, having the ability to experience and analyze both the home and target cultures. And teachers of the culture of a linguistic community need informed insight into the culture to be taught and informed insight into the culture of the language learners. Whether native speaker or foreign-language teacher, those wishing to present another culture in a way which may foster intercultural understanding and appreciation will need to acquire special knowledge of how cultures are organized—their value system, their institutions, their interpersonal relationships. Where possible, teachers should live for some time in both the cultures to be taught. If this is not possible, we must compensate for the lack by disciplined reading. We must read what the people living in the culture read (books, newspapers, magazines), listen to the radio and watch the television broadcasts where accessible, and watch films made of local consumption. Whenever possible, we should contact with native speakers, discussing all kinds of subjects with them and in this way we could educate ourselves in cultural interpretation. Finally, by teaching about other cultures, foreign language educators do not necessarily nip prejudice in the bud, so to speak; cultural bias can still plague the very aspects of the target culture which teachers 'choose to indict or advocate', as Cormeraie (1997) insightfully remarks. The teachers of another culture must develop sensitivity toward the attitudes of the students toward their own and other culture, moving delicately toward attitude change. Above all, native teachers and foreign-language teachers alike must overcome the temptation to demonstrate the superiority of one culture over another. Hopefully, the above lines have contrived to clarify most of the issues it set out to investigate, and have helped contribute to a better understanding of culture and its importance in the foreign language classroom.

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