



Learning English Language and the Effects of Culture: A Critical Study.

Corresponding Author: Dr.P.Hathiram, Assistant Professor of English. (ram.palathi@gmail.com)

Sridevi Women's Engineering Collegean UGC Autonomous Institution, Hyderabad.

Mr.LingamurthyMondaddula, Faculty in English, DC College, Hyderabad.

Mr. Ravi Kumar.G. Assistant Professor at Jayashankar Agriculture University, Hyderabad.

Abstract:

The purpose of this paper is to illustrate how culture affects learning English. It is common to think of language and culture as an intrinsic pair, or as two sides of the same coin. Language is not a cultural barrier. Effective communication in a second or foreign language requires one to be able to neglect the cultural background that lends the words their wider meanings. There is agreement regarding the significance of linguistic competency, which is defined as understanding the writing system, pronunciation, syntax and vocabulary for language production. Cultural competency is something that is frequently overlooked, that is an understanding of all the various belief systems and systems that people in a community share and conveyed via spoken language (Bentahila & Davies, 1989).

Gaining an understanding of culture is essential to learning any language. "Language and culture are not separate, but acquired together, with each providing support for the development of the other," according to Mitchell and Myles (2004) (p. 235). Cultural differences can lead to a lot of mistakes. Language has an impact on people's identities and behaviors in addition to altering their habits and values. While learning an English language requires a variety of skills, such as speaking, writing, listening, and grammar, this paper will highlight how English language culture affects the acquisition of these four language abilities.

Keywords: *learning English, the relationship between language and culture, cultural influence, and cultural awareness.*



1. Introduction:

The aims of the paper are to explore the close and inherent relationship between culture and language, as well as the application of instructional approaches and techniques for teaching second languages. Improve students' linguistic comprehension through language through culture. The language is not just the both an artistic creation and a cultural emblem (Gleason, 1961). Incorporating culture is imperative. Fundamentally, as a crucial element in the instruction and acquisition of second languages. Only following the incorporation of cultural concerns as a fundamental and organic component of language education, Can pupils succeed in learning the language they want to learn? Consequently, second language instructors ought to be more aware of the diversity of cultures and recognize important cultural objects in each and every way.

When creating a language curriculum, educators should incorporate suitable teaching techniques into learning exercises to assist students in bridging and surpassing cultural differences. Language is a tool for communication. We use words, symbols, and other forms of expression to communicate our needs, wants, and other feelings, a gesture that is regarded as a language. One way to characterize language is as verbal, physical, biological instinctive and a fundamental mode of expression. Culture is the attributes of a specific group of people, as defined by linguistic, religious, gastronomic, social, artistic, and musical practices. So, Language is a means of expressing culture, so learning a new language without being acquainted with its Culture is still lacking. According to Kumagai (1994), as stated by Smith (1987a) in the introduction of *Discourse Across Cultures*, understanding things like the appropriate topics of conversation, the place for silence, forms of address, and speech-act expressions (such as requests, apologies, agreement, disagreement, etc.) are perhaps more crucial to successful cross-cultural communication than phonology, grammar, or lexis, as the Cultures do not share the same former. In cross-cultural and international communication, where Since English is the primary language, one should not anticipate that the discourse strategies in English will not be the same as one's own, nor should one interpret other people's language usage based on their own cultural preconceptions. Societies with diverse cultural backgrounds, values, and lifestyles exist throughout the world. Behaviors, origins, and linguistic diversity. On the surface, language and



culture seem to be two distinct fields, yet they are intertwined and have a reciprocal impact on one another. According to Gleason (1961), languages are symbols as well as products of cultures. Language development usually has an impact on the culture it is associated with, and cultural norms of Language frequently contain explicit codes related to cognition and custom. In addition, language is a social institution that both influences and is influenced by society (Armour-Thomas &Gopaul-McNicol, 1998). This indicates that language is a social practice that both creates and is created by the social institutions' structures and forces, within which we live and work, rather than an independent construct. Undoubtedly, language cannot exist in a vacuum, and there must always be some "transfusion" occurring between dialect and society. Understanding the concepts of language acquisition will also lead to the acquisition of the target society's culture.

Language is a system of signals that encodes information through voice sounds, gestures, and written symbols and interprets data decoding. Language is used to transmit meaning and to express your ideas to other people. The major goal as we start to polish our language skills is to converse or engage in social interaction. According to Alyasery (2018), who cites Halliday (1973, p. 10), there are seven distinct domains in which language functions, including:

- Instrumental function: the use of language to influence circumstances, to bring about things that will occur.
- Regulatory functions: the way in which language directs actions. The regulations might be approved, or the listener's lack of approval.
- Representational function: when words are used to express ideas, communicate information and knowledge, elucidate, or document.
- Interactive function: knowledge is implied when language maintains social order.

Of colloquialisms, jokes, folktales, cultural mores, etiquette, and formality standards in socialtrade. Language serves a personal function when it conveys thoughts, feelings, and individuality.



- Heuristic function: the process by which knowledge and learning are acquired through language.

Using language to write poetry, novels, tongue twisters, and other creative works is known as the imaginative function. Regarding the matter, four points of view exist. According to the first, in order to acculturate language learners into the cultures of English-speaking people, "target language culture" should be taught alongside English. Nations (Byram & Flemming, 1998; Byram, 1990). According to the second study, there shouldn't be any instruction in "target language culture" in conjunction with English in nations where English is a current variation (Bachru, 1985). Two more opinions disagree with the notion of teaching "target language and culture in addition to English. But even though one point of view advocates for the instruction of "local The alternative perspective on culture in English language instruction (Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996; McKay, 2003) maintains that since English has become a universal language, it should be taught in a setting that is free of cultural bias. Alptekin (2005), p.

2. The Impact of Culture in Teaching and Learning English

According to Saloomeh (2018), context plays a crucial role in determining the situations in which language is appropriate. Precisely and suitably, referring to Kramsch 1. Culture provides ELT with a wide range of viewpoints, that can be used to improve classroom dynamics, particularly for undergraduate students' who may be hostile or indifferent to a subject because they have already selected it as their area of study, if they don't think the teacher's ambitious lesson plan is relevant. Thus, it's critical to understand the techniques that a teacher could use to Therefore, it's critical to understand the strategies a teacher may use to steer clear of "teaching meaningless symbols or symbols to which the student attaches the wrong meaning" (Politzer, 100–101). Highlights Dimitrios Thanasoulas that two points of view have impacted culture instruction thus far, and that have acted as a template for incorporating it into language instruction¹⁰: One concerns the dissemination of Factual and cultural data, comprising statistical data pertaining to institutional structures and other facets of the intended society; highbrow information, such as being immersed in literature and the arts; and lowbrow information, which might be centered on daily routines, habits, and folklore (3). Similar to an efferent reading, all



this viewpoint provides are facts that cannot elicit a profound thought. Reflection in the classroom, which limits educators and learners to only being aware of the manner of the nation from which the data was obtained. Since this leads to no other leads, details that could help students put it in context and shape their perception of the nation's culture generates what "amounts to facts," and it might stay as sterile as if it were taken from a travel guidebook.

According to Thanasoulas (2001), the alternative viewpoint, which is based on anthropology or cross-cultural psychology, "has been to embed culture within an interpretive framework and establish connections, namely, points of reference or departure, between one's own and the target country." As stated by the author, this approach's limitations are that it can only provide students with cultural knowledge and it is up to them to incorporate it into their own society's presumptions, convictions, and ways of thinking. This, that's where the teacher's role can have an impact, though, As in an artistic interpretation, In order for the students to create their own interpretations and reflections, the teacher must provide guidance. Based on their personal experiences, by first engaging in critical thought and then contrasting and comparing the two distinct two distinct cultural contexts.

Nevertheless, using this model in the ELT is absolutely necessary. There are numerous things to take into account, like applying organizing principles and connecting new information to what is already known, to connect seemingly contradictory events and engage in a rigorous and critical dialogue with information and experience. Thus, as Rosenblatt's aesthetic reading perspective has already demonstrated, it is essential to maintain the lines of communication between educators and students are open for cultural feedback to occur freely between individuals. Consequently, this keeps the dynamic atmosphere of personal and group experimentation with creativity. Ultimately, culture plays a critical role in ELT because it will mean the distinction between non-serious speakers who stay outsiders and knowledgeable speakers the world that the words create and their meaning behind them. Communication and culture are inextricably linked, as noted by Samovar, Porter, and Jain. This is because culture not only determines who speaks to whom who, what, and how the conversation develops, it also aids in figuring out how people encode messages, the interpretations they assign to messages, and the situations and conditions under which different messages might be sent, seen, or understood, or not Culture is the basis of



correspondence (24). Therefore, when learners of foreign languages who have been instructed in both the language and the culture their messages, they will do so from a profound comprehension of who they are rather than from a voidstating, its history, and its ramifications.

They will be far more capable of doing than just conveying basic wants and concepts; additionally, they will be much more fitted to engage with and fully contribute to the target language culture. According to Kumagai (1994), academics and experts in the field of applied linguistics as well as Teachers of languages have been emphasizing the importance of integrating cultural knowledge into second and teaching foreign languages (e.g., Patrikis, 1988; Moorjani & Field, 1988; Lafayette, 1988) 1985; and so forth). Researchers in the fields of sociolinguists, communication theorists, and Anthropologists regarding the close connection between linguistic usage and cultural values (e.g., Hall, 1978; Hymes, 1962; Loveday, 1982; Scollon & Scollon,) that govern this use 1981; and so forth).

According to Alyasery (2018), culture encompasses all of the acquired human behavioral patterns. The renowned English anthropologist Edward B. Tylor coined the phrase "primitive culture" in his book *Primitive Culture*, which was first published in 1871. Culture is "that complex whole which includes knowledge, according to Tylor Conviction, the arts, the law, morals, customs, and any other skills and behaviors that humans have developed as a part of society "It is not exclusive to men, of course. It is created and possessed by women. Ever since Tylor's period, the idea of culture has taken center stage in anthropology. Culture is a human power. Tool for surviving, but it's a transient state. It is dynamic and easily misplaced. Since, it is limited to our imaginations. Governments, structures, written languages, and other artifacts are simply byproducts of culture. By itself, they are not culture. As a result, during excavations, archaeologists are unable to directly uncover culture. The broken vessels and other ancient artifacts they have uncovered are the only tangible remnants of previous cultures. Patterns are items that were created and employed using cultural knowledge and abilities. Additionally, a group of people's culture is characterized by their language, religion, food, social customs, music, and artistic expression. Countries are distinct due to their cultures. Every nation has unique cultural practices and customs of its own. Culture is not limited to material a possession that is items produced and used by the culture. The views and ideals of the people in that culture



also make up that customs. Culture also encompasses how individuals perceive and understand their own and other people's lives. Additionally, cultures within a region, society, or subgroup can differ. There may be a particular distinct culture from other similar workplaces. This nation's province might have a distinct culture compared to the national average. For instance, Banjara people in the north and south have distinct cultural traditions, which are reflected in disparate speech patterns, musical tastes, and dance styles. Moreover, a family might uphold particular values, according to the proportion of that society's religious beliefs.

3. The Value of Culture in the Learning of Language

Wei (2005:56), according to Alyasery (2018), claims that language has two distinct personalities: it can be used as a tool of communication as well as a cultural ambassador. Just as language cannot exist without culture, neither can human culture. Without using words. A language's reflection of a culture is unique. According to Brown (1994:165), language and culture are inextricably linked; it is impossible to separate the two. A language is a part of a culture and a culture is a part of a language. Without diminishing the significance of culture or language to put it simply, language and culture are eternally linked (as stated in Jiang, 2000: 328). Regarding the fundamentals of instruction and learning, as Gao As (2006) demonstrates, there is such a clear correlation between language and cultural learning that it follows that learning a language is learning a culture, and that teaching a language is teaching about culture (p. 59).

Gao goes on to say that teachers of foreign languages should be conscious of the role that cultural studies play in language classrooms and work to improve their students' communication skills and cultural awareness. Similarly, Wang (2008) claims that "foreign language foreign language teachers are also foreign culture teachers, and teaching is teaching foreign cultures. Tomalin (2008) asserts that globalization and the English language's worldwide role are the two key justifications for adding culture instruction to the core language skills of speaking, listening, and reading as well as writing. The fifth language skill teaches you, how to use English in a way that allows you to learn about, comprehend, the values, customs, and distinctive features of other cultures. It entails knowing how to use words to be open to change and to be adaptable and understanding of approaches that may differ from your own. That is a mindset Transformation



expressed through language use. Additionally, Tomalin (2008) contends that instruction in Knowledge of the institutions that make up culture, or the big C, should be included in ELT lessons on culture. Cultural values—the nation's "psyche," or what people consider to be significant—and cultural behavior (awareness of customs and behavior, the little c), as well as cultural competencies (the growth of intercultural awareness and sensitivity, using the English language as a medium for communication).

4. Cultural Influence on Vocabulary

Vocabulary is the foundation of language and language is the medium through which culture is transmitted. The Cultural differences will unavoidably be reflected in the vocabulary, and vocabulary explanations will additionally mirror societal or cultural shifts. Thus, learning a language implies not only the knowledge of its grammar rules and the denotative meanings of words but it implicates much more, such as the culture phenomena, the way of life, customs, food and habits, history and everything that is contained of culture. In a word, culture isa comprehensive combination with abundant implication, and each factor in it may be exhibited onwords. Learning vocabulary, while paying attention to cultural factors, is essential and crucial. Otherwise, one will be apt to mockery people to wear black clothes in their funeral ceremonies. Thus, learning a language implies not only the knowledge of its grammar rules and the denotative meanings of words but it implicates much more, such as the culture phenomena, the way of life, customs, food and habits, history and everything that is contained of culture. In a word, culture isa comprehensive combination with abundant implication, and each factor in it may be exhibited onwards. Learning vocabulary, while paying attention to cultural factors, is essential and crucial. Otherwise one will be apt to mockery and irony. Acquiring knowledge of language while considering cultural context is vital. If not, one is likely to encounter sarcasm and mockery.

5 The Impact of Culture on Speech

Similar to listening skills, speaking abilities encompass more than just intonation and pronunciation. Individuals must read extensively to gain an understanding of the cultural background of the language they are speaking; only then can they effectively communicate with



others and avoid misunderstandings or misinterpretations. Therefore, when teaching oral English, educators should place a strong emphasis on the language's practical application and make an effort to use materials that are relevant to everyday life. This can assist people in using appropriate language in appropriate situations and within appropriate contexts. Otherwise, a person may misunderstand something or make mistakes even if they are highly qualified in the language's linguistic aspects due to a lack of background knowledge in the relevant culture. Consequently, a young interpreter's experience serves as an example: There is a young interpreter who's Natural and standard pronunciation is used. When he was initially assigned to go with a foreign visitor, he made every effort to demonstrate his enthusiasm, kindness, consideration, and capable. In an attempt to appear as vigilant as possible, he said, "You come this way." "You take a seat here." "Avoid leaving." too quickly. "Show me where to go." "Aim to arrive on time." However, to his surprise the following day, the foreigner had decided not to accompany him, believing the young interpreter to be impolite. The interpreter appears to be reprimanding the foreigner as if he were a child, rather than offering assistance. There's the interpreter's English is flawless, but his ignorance of the cultural background makes him for this job, misinterpreted. So, it's evident that if you don't know someone's cultural background and you understand how to use language practically and know who to say what to and when in this circumstance.

6. Methods for Increasing Cultural Sensitivity

There is a wide range of opinions regarding the methods that should be employed in the classroom to help students become more culturally aware. Drama and literature have been proven to be particularly useful for making students who are receptive to different cultural viewpoints. Role playing is a common technique for communicative language use, in which pupils are urged to utilize language creatively and imaginatively. Authentic aids are always welcome in role plays because they are based on real-life situations from nations where English is the primary language. Drama is also helpful in getting students directly involved in cross-cultural misinterpretation of culture. Students can learn how common proverbs in the target language differ from or are similar to proverbs in their mother tongues by discussing these proverbs.



Students can be guided to analyze the differences between two cultures by using proverbs as a transferred tool to explore Cultural similarities and differences.

7. Conclusion

Our ability to create instructional strategies and pedagogies for teaching second languages will be aided by our understanding of the connection between linguistics and culture. Culture is a component of language, and language is a linguistic component. It is important to emphasize to the two that they are highly dependent on one another. Given that motivation is essential for second language acquisition, educators should try to make their Teaching language in an engaging and contextually relevant manner is our goal. Culturally sensitive ELT Students are given the intercultural competencies they need in the classroom to effectively communicate in today's globalized society. One should use both one's own culture and that of another country in order for students to comprehend a different culture. Instead of having teachers merely impart facts about people and their cultures, learners will need to create their own meanings through their interactions with native speakers or text. While selecting instructional materials and resources, we take the sociocultural background of the learners into account. Strategies for specific educational contexts because disobeying the expectations and norms of the students -that is, dismissing the experiences that students bring to the classroom. Absence of taking into account differences in learning cultures can cause frustration and subsequently lead to failure in classrooms that teach languages. Because it is a "social" use of language that fosters camaraderie and warmth among speakers, mastery of the cultural contexts in which significant social acts take place is necessary for language learners to achieve proficiency in that language. Learners of languages must understand what native when they use the language; speakers mean it, even if they don't choose to mimic native speakers' actions. After all, we acquire more language skills the more cultural ideas we learn; the more the more language we possess, the more efficient we are.



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