TEACHING CULTURE IN ENGLISH CLASSES

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Huda Abdullah Alsadah
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ABSTRACT

TEACHING CULTURE IN ENGLISH CLASSES

by

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For ESL/EFL students to develop a more complete knowledge of the target language, they must also possess general knowledge of the culture as well. The information in this thesis does not only apply to successfully learning a new language, but to other subjects as well. Education is the foundation for success in today’s world. This is dependent on the quality, not quantity of education that is available. A student can learn the grammar and vocabulary, but will not be able to have functional conversations with native speakers without learning about the culture. Without the use of authentic materials and the teaching of culture, students will never fully grasp the language.

In this thesis, I will identify how students can understand and accept that there are different ways to view the world, and other people’s actions and behaviors. Through education we can work towards the goal of globalization and bridging the international communication gap. In order to bridge intercultural gaps, we need to focus on the development of language education. In particular, we need to focus on learning the
cultures of the foreign languages we strive to acquire. Knowledge of the language as well as culture will help us to bridge the gaps in the international community.

Without the knowledge and skills, Saudi Institutes, and instructors will not be able to teach the English language effectively or efficiently; students will not get the rich, culturally complete knowledge of the target language.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 provides background information for the study. It contains my experience in learning the English language in Saudi Arabia versus The United States. This chapter also includes the statement of need, purpose of this study, and limitations of the study. This chapter covers the thesis question: What is the relationship between language teaching and culture and how can language teachers use this relationship to make language teaching and learning more effective?

Background

I have studied English in Saudi Arabia several different times and in different institutes, but I did not feel that I could use what I had studied there, in the United States or in any foreign country. After I came to the United States, I studied English in the American Language and Culture Institute (ALCI) (n.d.) at California State University, Chico, and I saw a big difference between studying English in Saudi Arabia and studying English here. ALCI provided me “high-quality language instruction, knowledgeable and supportive counseling, and a compassionate bridge between cultures” (ALCI, n.d.) “ALCI invites” students “to study English and experience American culture.” (ACLI, n.d.) After the ALCI classes, I took the culture class, and I knew after I took this class why teaching English in Saudi Arabia is not useful and why learning the culture improves
a student’s ability to speak English. They do not teach American culture in English classes; they teach Arabian culture during English classes. All their materials and examples are from Arabian culture. This is why I chose this to bridge the gap between studying culture and studying language in Saudi Arabia.

Statement of Need

In Saudi Arabia, many changes are needed in the education system. One of these changes is to create English Language Teaching Institutes in Saudi Arabia instead of sending students to the United States or other countries to study English and attend a university. Saudi Arabia’s institutes teach only the English language, and teachers do not make connections between the language and the culture in their classes. The students who learn English in Saudi Arabia have a totally different understanding about the life of Americans in United States, because they learn the language in Saudi Arabia and then study at American universities in the United States. Some of these students can pass the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) test, but they cannot engage in American culture, and they cannot understand Americans’ behaviors.

Teaching the culture in the ESL classes gives students the background they need to engage in a new culture. English language curriculum should discuss the target language’s culture, society, history, language, values, and most importantly, students should practice these in the class. This is the way to make connections between the cultures. Students who want to study any language have to learn about the culture of that language. Students cannot learn the language without learning the culture. Learning culture helps students understand people’s behaviors, perspectives, and values. Students
who have the cultural background will be able to engage in the new culture and benefit more than the students who do not have this cultural background.

This study supports the premise that English language students need to learn culture while they are also learning language. It is important in bringing changes to my country because they do not teach American culture in English classes.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of my research is to confront assumptions and explore what we do not know. The main aim of foreign language teaching is to develop a students’ ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in various situations. The purpose of this study is to explore adding the teaching of culture to Saudi Institutes to facilitate intercultural communication and understanding. The English language is a universal language, and one of the most complex issues in teaching English today is determining the cultural basis of an international language such as English. One of the purposes is to make Saudi teachers and institutes “aware of conventional behaviour in common situations in the target culture” (Seelye, 1988, as cited in Kaynakça & Stempleski, 2003) and “increase awareness of the cultural connotations of words and phrases in the target language” (as cited in Kaynakça & Stempleski, 2003).

Research Questions

1. What are the definitions of culture? Which are the most important for language teaching and why?

2. What is the relationship between language and target culture teaching?

3. Why is teaching the target languages’ culture important for EFL students?
4. What does the research reveal about effective practice and teaching culture?

5. What is the role of authentic materials in teaching culture and how can authentic materials be effectively integrated in language teaching?

Theoretical Bases and Organization

The main question addressed in this thesis is the relationship between language and target culture teaching. We assume that there are relationships between language and culture, and these assumptions are based on scientific theories as the thesis will address in the literature review. The thesis is going to answer these questions: what is the relationship between language teaching and culture, and how can language teachers use this relationship to make language teaching and learning more effective.

In chapter two, the thesis examines literature that uses culture to teach languages and the impact of teaching the target culture for ESL/EFL learners. Culture and language are two inseparable concepts. Studying language without culture doesn’t give learners the knowledge and the benefits that they need. Language learners cannot apply what they have learned into the real life, without also studying culture. They will have the language, but they won’t know how to use the language because each language reflects the society in which it is used.

Chapter three discusses and analyzes the findings in the literature review about effective practices in cultural teaching. This includes, teaching culture in language classrooms, using the five dimensions of culture, the national standards for foreign language education, and teaching culture in language classrooms using the effective instructional sequence.
Chapter four discusses the role of authentic materials in cultural teaching. It also describes how authentic materials can be effectively integrated in language teaching and how language teachers can use authentic materials to teach culture. These authentic materials are the broadcast media, newspapers, advertising, songs and music. Finally, there is a summary and recommendations based on theories and research.

Limitations of the Study

This research was designed for teaching English to adults in Saudi institutes. Due to time limitations, the research did not address or survey teaching culture in Saudi Arabia. This study is for Arabian institutes and Arabian instructors who already know that Saudi institutes do not teach culture in English classes. In addition, ESL/EFL instructors who do not have experience teaching culture and limited knowledge and skills in using teaching culture materials may find this research difficult to understand and apply.

Definition of terms

Artifacts

Artifacts are:

...individual objects created, or adapted by members of the culture. They are the “thing” of the culture, commonly known to language teachers as ‘realia,’ ‘authentic material,’ and to anthropologists as ‘material culture.’ For any culture, the list of artifacts is long. (Moran, 2001, p. 49)
**Authentic Materials**

In Harmer’s (1991) view, authentic materials are “Those which are designed for native speakers: they are ‘real’ texts, designed not for language students, but for the speakers of the language in question” (p.185).

**Communities**

Moran (2001) defines cultural communities as:

The specific social contexts, circumstances, and groups in which members carry out cultural practices. These contexts range from broad, amorphous communities- such as national culture, language, gender, race, religion, socioeconomic class, or generation- to more narrowly defined groupings- a local political party, a social club, coworkers, or family. (p. 25)

**Culture**

Moran (2001) presents a definition of culture based on realities used in the language classroom. He integrated teaching a language with its culture. Teaching culture, in Moran’s view, helps students understand the language that they learn. Moran defines culture as follows: “Culture is the evolving way of life of a group of persons, consisting of shared set of practices associated with a shared set of products, based upon a shared set of perspectives on the world, and set within specific social contexts” (p. 24).

**English as a Foreign Language (EFL)**

English as a Foreign Language is learning English in a non-native English community such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, France, or China.

**English as a Second Language (ESL)**

English as a Second Language (ESL) is learning English in a native English community such as the United States or the United Kingdom.
Identity

“Individual members of the culture have their own distinct identities, derived in part from their unique characteristics, experiences, and outlooks and in part from their membership in particular groups and communities” (Moran, 2001, p. 99).

Linguistic Competence

Chomsky (1965) defines linguistic competence as “What one knows about the language while linguistic performance is one’s actual language use.”

Person

Cultural persons are the individual members who embody the culture and its communities in unique ways. Each person is distinct mix of communities and experiences, and all persons take on particular cultural identity that both links them to and separates them from other members of the culture. (Moran, 2001, p. 25)

Perspective

“Cultural perspectives encompass perceptions, beliefs, values, and attitudes” (Moran, 2001, p. 74).

Places

“Places or physical settings are also cultural products. Places encompass use or interpretation of the physical features of the natural environment” (Moran, 2001, p. 52).

Practice

“Cultural practices include language, products, specific social settings, and people” (Moran, 2001, p. 58).
Products

“Cultural products are the visible dimension of culture, are the gateway to the new culture, the new way of life” (Moran, 2001, p. 48).

Scenarios

“Scenarios are extended communicative practices that involve a series of interactions, including operations and acts” (Moran, 2001, p. 61).
CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Chapter 2 examines the literature used in the thesis. It includes learning and teaching strategies, as well as why they are important in acquiring a new language. Additionally, it mentions the impact of teaching culture to ESL/EFL students, stressing the importance of learning culture with language, so that the student can embrace learning the language.

The Relationship Between Language and Culture

An education is important in everyone’s life, and it can make all the difference in the world. With education, the world has become more technologically advanced, and it feels as if the whole world is one village. We call this globalization, which means the world is like one village and has one economy, one culture, one education, and most importantly, one language. All of us try to take a role as an active member in this village, and we take on this role by helping to develop education.

To improve education and learning, we focus on the development of the educational process. We need to pay more attention to the English language education process, because English is the universal language. “One of the most complex problems in teaching English today is determining the cultural basis of teaching an international
language such as English” (McKay, 2003, para. 1). In order to examine this problem, it is necessary to consider the characteristics of an international language:

One feature of an international language is that it must be widely spoken. Today, however, English is not the most widely spoken language in the world because it is only spoken by one third the number of people who speak of Mandarin. What makes English distinct at the present time is not the number of native speakers, but the growing number of L2 speakers of English. (McKay, 2003, “The Characteristics,” para. 1)

In fact, Brutt-Griffler's (2002) maintains that:

In the not-too-distant future, the number of L2 speakers of English will surpass the number of native speakers and one of the central features of an international language is that it tends to establish itself alongside other local languages in a multilingual context, resulting in many bilingual speakers of the language. Presently, many of the bilingual speakers of English have no desire to acquire the culture of native speakers of English because, unlike immigrants to English-speaking countries, they will not be living and interacting in a native-English-speaking context. (as cited in McKay, 2003, “The Characteristics,” para. 1)

However, I pose this question: how can we study a language without studying the culture of that language? In order to know what the benefits of teaching culture are we have to answer the question: What is culture?

Moran (2001) presents a definition of culture, based on realities and potential of the language classroom. Above all, these realities call for a view of culture that integrates language and culture in an understandable and accessible manner, all the while allowing for the complexity and mysteries of culture. Moran (2001) defines culture as the evolving way life that bonds us to a community. He said “Culture is the evolving way of life of a group of persons, consisting of shared set of practices associated with a shared set of products, based upon a shared set of perspectives on the world, and set within specific social contexts.” (Moran, 2001, p. 24) The bonds are formed through shared practices, products and perspectives that are similar within the community. The culture
also reflects the history and traditions associated with practices, perspectives, communities and products of the culture. While individuals grow within a society, they are also actively creating and changing the products, practices, perspective and communities.

Claire Kramsch and H. G. Widdowson (2001) in *Language Expresses Cultural Reality*, argue that language and culture are related. They observe:

The words people utter refer to common experience. They express facts, ideas, or events that are communicable because they refer to a stock of knowledge about the world that other people share. Words also reflect their authors’ attitudes and beliefs, their point of views that are also, those of others. (Kramsch & Widdowson, 2001, p. 3)

In *Culture in Second Language Teaching and Learning*, Eli Hinkel (1999) states that the term culture has a lot of meanings, “Some language teachers use the term to refer to cultural products (e.g., literary works or works of art). Others use it to refer to background information (e.g., facts about history or geography of countries where the target language is spoken). Here, the term culture includes such aspects, but it also includes behavior and aptitudes, and the social knowledge that people use to interpret experience” (Hinkel, 1999, p. 197).

Hinkel (1999) argues that people interpret other people’s behaviors by their beliefs and perspectives, and that’s why language learners need to study the target language’s culture to understand their perspectives. “Culture can be seen as the framework of assumptions, ideas, and beliefs that are used to interpret other people’s actions, words, and patterns of thinking” (p. 197). She also notes that, “It is crucial that foreign language learners should become aware of differing cultural frameworks, both their own and those of others; otherwise they will use their own cultural system to
interpret target language messages whose intended meaning may well be predicated on quite different cultural assumptions” (Hinkel, 1999, p. 197).

Linguistic Dimension of Culture

McKay (2003) indicates that teaching culture is important in the linguistic dimension of culture. She says, “Culture is embedded in many of the lexical phrases of English, for example, in well-known U.S. English phrases such as big stick diplomacy, yellow journalism, and Uncle Tom” (McKay, 2003, “Linguistic Dimension,” para. 1). She indicates that language teachers have to teach target culture within the language classes. She says, “In terms of teaching EIL, if there is no need for L2 speakers to internalize the cultural norms of native speakers, as Smith contends, then the teaching of such phrases in an English class needs to be questioned” (McKay, 2003, “Linguistic Dimension,” para. 1). She suggests that EIL teachers need to make the “choice of what lexical phrases should be included in an EIL curriculum” (McKay, 2003, “Linguistic Dimension,” para. 1).

Culture also plays an important role in teaching materials and methods. Cortazzi and Jin (1999) distinguish three types of cultural information that can be used in language textbooks and materials:

1. Source culture materials, which draw on the learners' own culture as content.
2. Target culture materials, which use the culture of a country where English is spoken as an L1.
3. International target culture materials, which use a great variety of cultures in English- and non-English-speaking countries around the world. (as cited in McKay, 2003, “Pedagogical Dimensions,” para. 1)
The Importance of Teaching Target Language

The ties between culture and language are important. International students need to engage in the new culture they live in; this is the crucial part of their English education that is missing, when learning English in Saudi institutes. Learning the new culture supports learning a new language. When students learn about the culture, they will be able to learn the language effectively, and this aids them in learning new concepts, vocabulary, and meanings. Students will learn the new language as renewed education. Peck (2011) argues that language learners cannot study language without the cultural background. She notes that, “Without the study of culture, foreign language instruction is inaccurate and incomplete. For foreign language students, language study seems senseless if they know nothing about the people who speak it or the country in which it is spoken” (Peck, 2011, “Introduction,” para. 3).

Studying the culture generally plays a useful role in language education. English language learners can also study geography, history, and other topic areas of the target culture. There are other benefits as well. Studying culture can be a motivation tool. Culture classes play an important role because learners like culturally based activities such as singing, dancing, role playing, doing research on countries and people (Genc & Bada, 2005, p. 73). Studying about the culture makes students interested in the target language want to learn more. Learning about the target culture gives learners the motivation that they need. Gardner and Lambert (1972).

Genc and Bada (2005), from Cukurova University, did a case study that shows the benefits of teaching the culture from both learners' and teachers’ perspectives. The
data in this study was taken from culture classes for students who are going to be English language teachers. The students in this case study made assessments and then responded by completing a questionnaire.

The researchers reported the following results of culture learning in English classes:

- **Language Skill**
  - They questioned the participants by asking them whether the culture course contributed to their language skills; 100% of the participants gave affirmative answers, which suggests that while, “developing language skills was not the major objective of the course, it influenced these skills positively” (Genc & Bada, 2005, p. 5).

- **Cultural Awareness.** “Nearly 70% of the participants felt such an awareness” (Genc & Bada, 2005, p. 5), therefore suggesting that the course achieved its goals, based on the examination of cultural awareness

- **Attitude towards the Target Culture.** Based on the examination, 75% of the participants gave positive thoughts regarding attitudes towards the target culture.

- **Contribution to Prospective Teaching Profession.** The study concluded that almost all of the participants had something to say regarding how the culture class would contribute to their teaching careers.

Ömer and Ali (2011) argue that studying language without culture doesn’t give learners the knowledge and the benefits that they need. Teaching the culture in the ESL’s classes gives the students the background they need to engage the new culture. “A culture integrated foreign language course can make positive contributions to students’
learning, language learning process and learning environment” (Ömer and Ali, 2011, p. 1).

Emma (2010) agreed that language and culture are related:

Language can be viewed as a verbal expression of culture...Language provides us with many of the categories we use for expression of our thoughts...our thinking is influenced by the language which we use. The values and customs in the country we grow up in shape the way in which we think to a certain extent. (Emma, 2010)

Byram (1993) argues that teaching target culture in language classes has three aims:

3. The development of insight into the foreign culture and positive attitudes toward foreign people (as cited in Hinkel, 1993, p. 197).

In Teaching Culture Perspectives in Practice, Moran (2001) observes that “Numerous outcomes for culture learning are currently in circulation in the field of language teaching as well as parallel fields of intercultural communication and multicultural education” (p. 109). Therefore, within an English class, teachers and students should discuss the student’s home culture, society, history, language, and values; and practice all of these within the classroom environment. This is the best way to connect the intercultural aspects and improve education and learning.
Educational Standards in Teaching Culture
In Language Classrooms

The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), identifies the Five Cs of foreign language education: “Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities” (ACTFL, n.d.b, 3). According to the Standards for Foreign Language Education:

Language and communication are at the heart of the human experience. The United States must educate students who are linguistically and culturally equipped to communicate successfully in a pluralistic American society and abroad. This imperative envisions a future in which ALL students will develop and maintain proficiency in English and at least one other language, modern or classical. (ACTFL, n.d.b, p. 2)

The Five C’s

- Communication

“One of the primary reasons for learning another language is to be able to communicate with people that speak in that language” (ACTFL, n.d.b, p. 4). The Communication standards are:

1. “Students engage in conversation, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions” (ACTFL, n.d.b, p. 4).
2. “Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics” (ACTFL, n.d.b, p. 4).
3. “Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics” (ACTFL, n.d.b, p. 4).
• Cultures. The Cultures standards are:
  1. “Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied” (ACTFL, n.d.b, p. 4).
  2. “Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied” (ACTFL, n.d.b, p. 4).
• Connections. The standards of the connections are:
  1. “Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language” (ACTFL, n.d.b, p. 4).
  2. “Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures” (ACTFL, n.d.b, p. 4).
• Comparisons.
  “Through comparisons and contrasts with the language being studied, students develop insight into the nature of language and the concept of culture and realize that there are multiple ways of viewing the world” (ACTFL, n.d.b, p. 3).

The Comparisons standards are:
  1. “Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language studied and their own” (ACTFL, n.d.b, p. 4).
  2. “Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own” (ACTFL, n.d.b, p. 4).
Communities

“Participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world.”

(ACTFL, n.d.b, p. 4)

The Communities standards are:

1. “Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting”
   (ACTFL, n.d.b, 4).
2. “Students show evidence of becoming life-long learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment” (ACTFL, n.d.b, 4).

The Five Dimensions of Culture

Moran (2001) asserts that the Five Dimensions of Culture have to be taught in language classrooms. These dimensions are products, practices, perspectives, communities, and persons. They are essential and need to be taught. A student needs to be taught these things in order to grasp the culture more completely. Using these five dimensions is like using stepping stone. They are a road to learning a language more effectively and efficiently. By learning about cultural products, perspectives, persons, practices and communities, students will be able to fully submerge themselves in the language learning process.

Authentic Materials in Language Classrooms

Tomlinson, the author of Materials Development of Language Teaching, defines authentic tasks; “As a task which involves learners in using language in a way that replicates its use in the ‘real world’ outside the classroom” (Tomlinson, 2011, p. ix). Tomlinson (2011) also addressed examples of these tasks. A student can answer letters
addressed to another student debating views. Students can compare and contrast brochures in order to decide where to go for vacation. Both are examples of authentic tasks. (Tomlinson, 2011, p. ix). She adds, “A newspaper article, a rock song, a novel, a radio interview, instructions on how to play a game and a traditional fairy story are examples of authentic texts” (Tomlinson, 2011, p ix).

Freda Mishan (2005), the author of *Designing Authenticity into Language Learning Materials*, addressed seven cultural products and the use of these cultural products for language learning. These products give learners the experience that they need in language acquisition. The authentic products in Mishan’s work (2005) include literature, the broadcast media, newspapers, advertising.

The use of authentic materials in a classroom is important in ESL/EFL students’ education. The impact that authentic materials have on students is great, compared to those who do not have access to the authentic materials. They provide real life scenarios that the students can incorporate into their lives. They get the benefit of learning with audio/visual aids from the target culture that allow them to relate to the culture on a different level. If used properly within the classroom, the students will integrate into the target culture easily.
CHAPTER III

TEACHING CULTURE

Introduction

Education plays an important role in everyone’s life, and it can make all the difference in the world. With education, the world has become more technologically advanced, and it feels as if the whole world is one village. We call this globalization, which means that the world is like one village and has one economy, one culture, one education, and most important, one language. All of us try to be an active member of this village, and we can take on that role by helping to develop education.

To improve global education, we have to focus on the development of the educational process, especially when studying the English language. English is considered the universal language; that’s why it is so important to be able to communicate efficiently. One of the most complex problems in teaching English today is, determining the cultural basis of teaching this international language.

The main goal of teaching culture in English classes is to develop communication, especially internationally. In Teaching Culture: Strategies for Intercultural Communication (Seelye, 1993) argues, “All students will develop the culture understanding, attitudes, and performance skills needed to function appropriately within a segment of another society and to communicate with people socialized in that culture” (Seelye, 1993, 29).
When students develop a cultural understanding of the attitudes and performance skills in a new community, it will help them to communicate within their new culture and use the language correctly. People who are culturally aware can behave more like native speakers of the language that they learn. Students can use the right vocabulary and engage in conversations with other people from different cultures. Teaching culture in English classes facilitates international communication, and people can understand each other even if they are from different communities. When people understand others, they will be able to communicate and interact with each other.

When a teacher makes intercultural understanding one of the goals in a language class, students become more knowledgeable about the foreign culture. Students learn cultural patterns of the language as well as behavior, communication, and functions (Chastain, 1988). Tomalsin and Stempleski’s (1993) book, *Cultural Awareness*, discusses the goals of cultural instruction. They observe that everybody comes from a different culture; therefore, they are conditioned to react in certain ways that are different from what they were taught. It is necessary to teach about the culture of the language so the students can use language properly. Students need to know how to react in a situation, and what language usage is appropriate. People are “guilty by association,” when it comes to social variables. We are grouped into different communities and are seen differently by the people and things that surround us. This aids in learning what is socially acceptable. It helps build empathy and tolerance for people coming from a different background. Clearly, it is vital to teach culture so the students can learn about the culture in which a language is spoken. This enables the student to gather information about the culture, and apply it as necessary.
The Definition of Culture

What is culture? The answer is not easy to define, especially when we relate culture to classrooms and teaching languages. Moran (2001) presents a definition of culture that can be used in the language classroom. He integrated teaching a language with its culture. In Moran’s view, teaching culture helps students understand the language that they are learning.

Moran defines culture as, “The evolving way of life of a group of persons, consisting of shared set of practices associated with a shared set of products, based upon a shared set of perspectives on the world, and set within specific social contexts” (Moran, 2001, p. 24). Each group of people has its own thoughts, way of life, feelings, practices, habits and behaviors based on the group’s values. These habits and practices reflect the ways of life for each group, its perspectives and views. It must be understood that when change occurs in the culture, it is due to people within that culture changing and actively creating products, practices, communities, and perspectives. This is a reflection of what is occurring within a community, which will eventually have an impact on the culture Moran (2001).

Each community has people, and each group within the community contains individuals. Brooks (1983) defines culture in relation to the individual. He said:

An individual’s role in the unending kaleidoscope of life situations of every kind and the rules and models for attitude and conduct in them. By reference to these models, every human being, from infancy onward, justifies the world to himself as best he can, associates with those around him, and relates to the social order to which he is attached. (p. 210)

Brown (2000) has a different definition for culture. He argues that culture is not just customs or arts: “It is a system of integrated patterns, most of which remain
below the threshold of consciousness, yet all of which govern human behavior just as
surely as the manipulated strings of a puppet control its motions” (Brown, 2000, p. 177).

with Moran’s definition of culture. George summarizes his view, reporting that,

Culture is all the accepted and patterned ways of behavior of a given people. It is
that facet of human life learned by people as a result of belonging to some particular
group; it is that part of learned behavior shared with other. Not only does this
concept include a group's way of thinking, feeling, and acting, but also the
internalized patterns for doing certain things in certain way. (George, 2010, p. 561)

Diaz-Rico and Weed (2002), authors of *The Crosscultural, Language, and
Academic Development Handbook*, present the definitions of culture from a different
perspective. They assert that:

Culture is the explicit and implicit patterns for living, the dynamic system of
commonly agreed upon symbols and meanings, knowledge, belief, art, morals, law,
customs, behaviors, traditions and/or habits that are shared and make up the total
way of life of a people, as negotiated by individuals in the process of constructing a
personal identity. (Diaz-Rico & Weed, 2002, p. 197)

Culture can be best described as an individual’s way of life as Diaz-Rico and
Weed (2002) discussed. The way of life is based on behaviors, beliefs and ideas that
make groups of humans unique. The ways individuals act, feel and behave based on their
way of life. Individuals rely on beliefs, values, and role models to determine how to
conduct themselves in the community. Culture is influenced by knowledge (past and
present), beliefs, art (literature, paintings, and music), morals, laws and customs. History
plays an important role in cultural development, as our past problem, affect our culture
and perspectives, and influence our future experiences. The way in which people
communicate with each other, both verbally and physically, is based on specifics related
to that culture. Media has an impact on culture as well. Culture is also defined by
individuals’ nationality, gender, ethnicity and religion—each of which represents
communities within a culture.

The Importance of Teaching the Target 
Culture

In order for students to cooperate with others in a community, they have to
know about the culture. Each individual has values, and uses language to decipher the
values. Language usage aids in the way one thinks, therefore influencing how we act. It is
critical to learn about culture, so that students can mix into society easier.

Thoughts and Values

• Emma (2010) argues that culture and language are related. Thoughts and values
are very important parts of culture, and people express their thoughts and values through
language. Language learners need to learn about the target culture to comprehend the
thoughts and values that hide within the language. Within each culture, people have their
own values and use language to interpret these values. Language learners have to learn
these values to understand people when they speak or write. This is essential in order to
cooperate and communicate in an efficient and effective manner. Emma (2010) observes
that:

... language provides us with many of the categories we use for expression of our
thoughts, so it is therefore natural to assume that our thinking is influenced by the
language which we use. The values and customs in the country we grow up in
shape the way in which we think to a certain extent. (p. 1)
• Background Knowledge

Just as thoughts and values affect language skills, learners’ background knowledge also affects their language. According to Patricia C. Salazar, (2009)

The student’s cultural, familial, and socioeconomic background cannot be separated from his or her learning experience. Even native English-speaking students differ in their vocabulary, grammatical use, and linguistic expression based on these factors. (p. 33)

Language students from the Middle East have different background knowledge than those from China or Korea. Each region has a different way of life that affects students’ language and thoughts. When a classroom has students from different regions, teachers need to understand that the learners express their thoughts in different ways using different vocabulary.

This is where background knowledge comes into play. The learners relate to their own culture and their family’s socioeconomic background in order to learn. This can present a challenge for teachers because language learners whose native language was acquired in another culture have to make connections between their knowledge and the new language they learn. Walqui (2000) argued the contextual factors in second language acquisition. She said:

We know that students build new knowledge on previously learned knowledge, and that compounds the challenge of our ELL students are not able to make connections between their previous knowledge and the new content they are learning in a new language. (p. 2)

Language teachers have to make the connection between students’ background and new knowledge. One way to acquire this knowledge is through authentic materials from the target culture like literature, music, and movies. Authentic materials from the target
culture facilitate the learning process and provide the knowledge base they need to connect their experience to what they learn. Robertson (2007) suggests that teachers:

Use folktales, literature and stories from other cultures as a way of encouraging students to connect what they are reading to their own experiences. Media specialists will be helpful in this effort as there is a growing body of literature based on culturally relevant and connected works. (as cited in Boyles, 2008, para. 3)

With this knowledge, learners are able to engage in conversation with native speakers of the target language. Boyles (2008) notes that:

The extent and type of prior knowledge is an essential consideration in planning instruction. For example, a student with informal conversational English skills may have little understanding of English grammatical systems and may need specific instruction in English grammar. (as cited in Walqui, 2000, p. 2)

Linguistic Relativity

Each language has developed ways to express thoughts, values, and perspectives, and language influences people’s thoughts. Kramsch (1998) defines this
process by saying, “The theory that languages do affect the thought processes of their users has been called “the theory of linguistic relativity” (p. 11). She asserts, “That different people speak differently because they think differently, and that they think differently because their language offers them different ways of expressing the world around them” (p. 11). For example, many Arab students have similar ideas on how to write something or how to react to a certain situation, and this is because they have the same language and background knowledge. “The theory of linguistic relativity does not claim that linguistic structure constrains what people can think or perceive, only that it tends to influence what they routinely do think” (p. 14). Language reflects people’s views about the world.

The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis

Language affects the way that people behave, think, and talk. This issue is argued by anthropologist Edward Sapir and his student, Benjamin Whorf in the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis (Kramsch, 1998). The hypothesis holds that people don’t use language just to describe what they say and think; language affects the way that people say words and build sentences, and the way that people see what they describe. Kramsch discusses this hypothesis in her book, Language and Culture, “The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis makes the claim that the structure of the language one habitually uses influences the manner in which one thinks and behaves” (p. 11). According to Kay and Kempton (1984):

The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis states that there are certain thoughts of an individual in one language that cannot be understood by those who live in another language. The hypothesis states that the way people think is strongly affected by their native languages. (p. 65)
Kramsch (1998) recounts Whorf’s famous story that explains the meaning of this hypothesis. When Whorf was working for an insurance company as a fire prevention engineer, he observed that people relate their behaviors to the names of certain things, and would behave based on the names, and how they were used in context.

The sight of the sign ‘empty’ on empty gasoline drums would prompt passersby to toss cigarette butts into these drums, not realizing that the remaining gasoline fumes would be likely to cause an explosion. In this case, the English sign ‘empty’ evoked a neutral space, free of danger. (Kramsch, 1998, p. 11)

Language determines people's behaviors and actions because people organize their perceptions, understandings, and views in their minds and then relate these to their experiences.

The Benefits of Teaching Target Language Culture in Language Classrooms

Culture and language are two inseparable concepts. Studying language without culture doesn’t give learners the knowledge and the benefits they need. "A culture integrated foreign language course can make positive contributions to students’ learning, language learning process and learning environment" (Ömer & Ali, 2011, p. 1). Language learners cannot apply what they have learned in the learning environment to real life without also studying the culture. They will have general knowledge of the language, but they will not know how to use the language because each language reflects the culture. Learners do not need to learn vocabulary and new words; they need to interact with the target language community and its people to learn the thoughts and values that are under the concept of ‘culture’. As Peck (2011) says, “A knowledge of the codes of behavior of another people is important if today’s foreign language student is to
communicate fully in the target language. Without the study of culture, foreign language instruction is inaccurate and incomplete” (Peck, 2011, “Narrative,” para. 3). In addition, Peck (2011) articulates, “For foreign language students, language study seems senseless if they know nothing about the people who speak it or the country in which it is spoken” (“Narrative,” para. 3).

In a language-learning environment, teaching just the linguistic part of the new language is not efficient, and a lot of language scientists have paid attention to this topic. Chastain (1971) said:

One of the major problems in language teaching is to conceive of the native speakers of target language as real person. Without background knowledge those real situations may be considered fictive by the learners. In addition providing access into cultural aspect of language, learning culture would help learners relate the abstract sounds and forms of a language to real people and places. (p. 25)

So, teaching culture gives students the background knowledge to engage others in their new culture.

Cultures Hiding in Languages

Language and culture are related, and language reflects people’s behaviors, thoughts, and actions. Language allows people to express their thoughts and ideas; which explains why thinking processes are influenced by the language that people use. Values and customs affect the way that people think. (Emma, 2010, p. 1) As Abisamra (2001) notes, “The two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture” (para. 11).

To be effective then, language learning curriculums have to reflect the view that the target culture must be taught within the context of the language learning
classroom. H. H. Stern (1992) argues that language curriculums have to reflect the view that language and society are intertwined. Stern (1992) asserts that:

If we take the view that language and society are closely intertwined we would probably want our curriculum to reflect this view, since it is difficult to see how one could teach a language without constant references to society and culture. A social view of language would make us conscious of the sociolinguistic context of the learners we are concerned with. (p. 24)

Studying culture also plays a role in communicating meaning. Students who study the target culture along with the language will be able to better communicate meanings to native speakers. Genc and Bada (2005) assert that students “encounter significant hardship in communicating meaning to native speakers” (Genc & Bada, 2005, p. 73). According to Abisamra (2001), “If it is important to teach a foreign language to enhance communication, it is also vital to instill in students an intellectual and emotional appreciation of the culture of that foreign language, so that communication will not be impaired” (para. 5).

Teaching the culture in ESL classes gives students the cultural background they need to engage with the new culture. English classes should discuss student’s home culture, society, history, language, and value. Most importantly, these should be practiced in class. This is the best way to make connections between the different cultures. Moran (2001) observes that “Numerous outcomes for culture learning are currently in circulation in the field of language teaching as well as parallel fields of intercultural communication and multicultural education” (Moran, 2001, p. 109).

Byram (1993) explains how culture can be integrated to achieve an intercultural connection.
1. The development of communicative competence for use in situations the learner might expect to encounter” (as cited in Hinkel, 1999, p. 197). Language learners are going to deal with native speakers as they encounter real life situations.

2. The development of an awareness of the nature of language and language learning” (as cited in Hinkel, 1999, p. 197). Learners need to develop an awareness of the nature of language to engage in the new culture and understand new people, behaviors and beliefs.

3. The development of insight into the foreign culture and positive attitudes toward foreign people” (as cited in Hinkel, 1999, p. 197). When students understand the target culture’s values and behaviors, they will be able to build positive attitudes toward foreign people.

Communication is an important part of teaching culture, but teaching culture plays an important role in learners’ educational motivation. Teaching culture also implies studying and learning about the geography, history, etc. of the target culture. Cooke (1970) argues that cultural studies promote students' motivation. He highlights activities that help students to enjoy language classes by engaging in dancing, singing, and doing research about the people and countries in the target culture. These activities help students to become interested in the target culture and countries, which also increases their motivation to learn the language. For example, when the language teachers teach students about the target culture—using food, history, traditional dance, and geography—learners become more interested in the culture and its people. They are more likely to learn more about these target cultures and enjoy these classes more than the traditional classes.
Valette (1995) says that history, geography, and science are an important part of culture that should be taught:

The other component of culture is the history of civilization. Traditionally representing the “culture” element in foreign language teaching, it includes geography, history, and achievements in the sciences, the social sciences, and the arts. This second component forms the framework for the first: it represents the heritage of a people and as such must be appreciated by the students who wish to understand the new target culture. (p. 179)

Conclusion

In order for individuals to learn a foreign language, be successful in using the language, and blend into the target culture; they must not only be taught the language, but also the culture. If there is nothing that individuals can relate to within the foreign culture, they will be less likely to enjoy studying the language. If individuals can relate to the foreign language being taught, then there is a very good chance that they will blend in with the rest of society. They will be able to have conversations that are relevant to the topic at hand, all while using the language more efficiently and effectively.

When teaching a language, the teacher needs to be just as resourceful as the student. The teacher needs to realize that each student is different. Teachers also need to know about students’ background knowledge in order to teach in an efficient manner. In order to make learning the target language interesting and appealing, teachers need to incorporate activities that are going to make learning fun, such as singing and dancing. They also need to teach students about the history and heritage of the target culture.

Culture is not just about the history and practices of a certain country. Culture envelops everything that has to do with a country. The country’s geography, history, science, dance, and music are all part of a country’s culture. Culture and language are
Teaching Culture in Language Classrooms
Using the Five Dimensions of Culture

When Moran talks about the meanings of the perspectives, values and actions of individuals within a group, he is talking about the five dimensions of culture. Language classes have to teach these five dimensions, as Moran (2001) defines them.

1. Culture Products: “The visible dimension of culture, are the gateway to the new culture, the new way of life” (Moran, 2001, 48). Art, literature, music, and video are all visible products that reflect culture. Moran argues that the language itself is a cultural product. He asserts that,

   Language is a cultural product in and of itself. Words, expressions, and structures are continually added or discarded. When spoken and written, language takes on tangible and perceptible forms. We can see written language, and we can hear language when spoken. These tangible forms, as with any cultural product, can be described through language. (p. 36)

   When students listen to or read the language that they learn from these products, they will be able to interpret the meaning and usage of words. For example, when they watch a video in the language they are learning, students will be able to relate and interpret the meaning of these words.

2. Culture Practices: According to Moran, "Practices involve language, products, specific social settings, and people" (2001, p. 58). He also notes that, “One of the most challenging cultural practices I have had to learn and teach is the conversational style of the French (and other francophones)—specifically, how they participate in casual conversation or discussion” (Moran, 2001, p. 57). Practicing culture is the most important
part in teaching culture. Cultural knowledge without practice doesn’t help students engage in a new culture and use their knowledge in the right way. Language learners need to practice the knowledge that they have in order to be a productive and successful member of society. They need to learn how to act and respond from small conversations to large discussions. Each language has its different forms of communication. They can be discussions, debates, reports, and a variety of others. Each learner needs to learn each of the conversational forms of communication in the language that they are learning. Only then, can the learner develop the knowledge of how to react, what to say, what words to use, in such communication. When students practice a language, they will be able to use the new vocabulary that they learned in the right place or right position in conversations.

3. Culture Perspective: Moran (2001) defines culture perspective:

   Like the other dimensions of cultural pentad, perspectives can be perceptions, beliefs, values, and attitudes can be explicitly stated in oral or written forms. These explicit perspectives are expressed through sayings, proverbs, creeds, proclamations, myths. (Moran, 2001, p. 75)

Each group of people has its own way of life, and the way of life reflects the group’s values. Written and spoken languages reflect different group perspectives. Moran says that, “Language reflects and embodies perspectives. We use language to name and understand the perceptions, values, attitudes, and beliefs that govern our way” (Moran, 2001, p. 74). Language learners need to study the cultural perspectives of the language that they learn. Students will recognize and understand the meaning of other culture terms and proverbs, and that helps them to interpret the meaning of written or spoken forms.
Moran (2001) argues that we read and hear the perspectives when we learn a new language. He says:

We talk and write about perspectives. We read about them. We hear them in exchanges with members of culture. Words, phrases, idioms, expressions—when we examine what they mean—reveal values, attitudes, and beliefs intrinsic to culture. (Moran, 2001, p. 37)

When students learn about the values, beliefs, and attitudes of the culture of the language that they study, they will be able to understand the context of this language, and they will be able to interpret the meaning of their phrases and build sentences that reflect these perspectives. Students also will be able to make comparisons between the values in their culture and other cultures by trying to build sentences to explain the comparisons. So, studying perspectives is one of the important goals of teaching culture in language classes.

4. Culture Communities: According to Moran (2001), communities:

Include the specific social contexts, circumstances, and groups in which members carry out cultural practices. These context range from broad, amorphous communities—such as national culture, language, gender, race, religion, socioeconomic class, or generation—to more narrowly defined groupings—a local political party, a social club, coworkers, or family. (Moran, 2001, p. 25)

He also observes that:

At the broadest level, the social institutions of the culture define communities and accompanying practices for everyone within the borders of the “national culture” Economic, political, educational, health, and other institutions exist for members of the national culture as a whole. (Moran, 2001, p. 91)

Language learners are going to engage in a new community that speaks the language that they learn. Language learners need to learn about the terms, words, and vocabulary that people use within the community. However, students also need to know
how they act in these communities. In hospital communities, for example, students need to learn health terms to help them to communicate efficiently, as well as to act appropriately when they need to go to the hospital. They need to know how to communicate with doctors and ask effective questions to a healthcare professional in order to get the help that is needed. All of these have to be taught to help students act within this community. So, each community has its own way of writing, speaking, and its own interpretations of meanings that are related to this group of people and their perspectives. Moran also states:

> When we situate language in specific communities or groups, we see variations in forms, meanings, and use according to these social settings and circumstances. Communities develop distinct language to describe and carry out the particular practices and products associated with their group and its activities. (2001, p. 38)

However, studying about communities has to be a goal of learning a language. Language learners have to learn about different communities and how they can act in each community, to be a productive member of society.

5. Culture Person: Moran (2001) has a clear definition of a culture person. He says:

> Constitute the individual members who embody the culture and its communities in unique ways. Each person is distinct mix of communities and experiences, and all persons take on particular cultural identity that both links them to and separates them from other members of the culture. (p. 25)

There is always a relationship between communities and the people who live in them. Communities affect the people who live in them. People have their own experiences within their communities, but these experiences are the result of their cultural identity. Where people live and who they live with always affects people. On the other hand, some people make changes that have the ability to impact their communities and they become a
part of their community’s history. Some famous people have affected the cultural identity of their communities, and they become a part of their community’s history. However, students who live in a new culture need to know a little bit about the history. When students learn about people and the changes that occurred in a culture, they will be able to understand their beliefs and how they think. That makes engaging in a new community easier.

Teaching Culture in Language Classrooms
Using the National Standards for Foreign Language Education

Teaching culture in English classes has to be based on a specific set of principles and not on the teacher’s mindset, because these principles come from studies and research that has a scientific basis. These principles help learners to attain the goals presented previously. Byram and Morgan (1994) stress that “Learners need to engage actively in the interpretations of the word and compare and contrast the shared meaning of both their own and foreign cultures” (as cited in Saluveer, 2004, p. 20).

Language teachers need to achieve students’ skills to help them with communication. One of these skills is seen in “Cultural Awareness: How is their cultural understanding reflected in their communication?” (Shrum, & Glisan 2009, p. 54). To achieve strategies for learning programs, teachers have to make students engage in the new community that they live in by understanding the culture and being aware of the culture cultural awareness. Language learners need to learn language using the Five C’s. The standards are not to be confused with curriculum: they are not a curriculum guide. The Five C’s emphasize the context in which students’ master the languages they are
learning (ACTFL, n.d.b, p. 2). “The Five C’s of foreign language education are Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities . . .” (ACTFL, n.d.b, p. 3). The following standards are associated with each of the Five C’s:

1. Communication: Without communication, students will not be able to engage in the new community, and they will not be able to engage in conversations. Students need communication to understand and interpret written and spoken language in order to help them use and practice the language that they are learning.

2. Cultures: Students can’t learn the language without learning the culture. Learning culture helps students to understand peoples’ behaviors, perspectives, and values. Students who have the cultural background will be able to engage in the new culture and benefit more than the students who don’t have this cultural background.

3. Connections: Students need to connect with other disciplines and acquire information, and that helps them improve their language skills. The information gives students the cultural background that they need to engage in the new culture that they live in.

4. Comparisons: When students learn new languages and compare their culture with the new culture, the language is going to improve automatically.

5. Communities: Students who are new to a place have to learn about new people, their culture and beliefs. Students have to know how to act in a new community in order to be part of the community. Thus, in turn, enhances the learners’ own personal experience and links classroom language with language in the real word.
Conclusion

In order to be a productive member of society in the target culture, the students must learn about both the language and culture. One of the goals of learning an international language such as English is the ability to communicate on a global level. By learning a language, students are bridging the gap and helping move education forward. They are learning new ways of life and beliefs as well as perspectives on a new culture. A student needs to learn about culture in order to be productive within the community.

Each community has its own language, slang, values, behaviors, etc. In order to become one within society, one must know how all of these function together as a whole. This is also part of the learning process that one must engage in, in order to be a member within a community. There are acceptable behaviors, some based on the usage of vocabulary. Some people choose to react to the word itself, while others have been conditioned to act differently.

Students need to learn through speaking, and teachers need to utilize lesson appropriate tools and materials to support them. Students need to be taught through materials that stimulate them. When students are motivated, they are more likely to understand what is sociably acceptable within the new culture. It is the teachers’ hope that they will be able to use the language effectively and comprehend the meaning of the language they use.

Without learning culture and what is sociably acceptable, a student will never fully grasp the target language. It is vital that teachers incorporate more than vocabulary, and grammar lessons into the language learning process. A teacher needs to incorporate
culture that the students can relate to. Only then, will students begin to communicate on a level that is acceptable.
CHAPTER IV

USING AUTHENTIC MATERIALS TO TEACH CULTURE

Introduction

Chapter 4 reviews the role of authentic materials in the classroom. It also incorporates how authentic materials can be used in a classroom to enhance language and culture learning. The chapter discusses the different authentic materials, and how they can be used effectively within the classroom. We address the question of why language teachers have to use authentic materials in their classes, define them, and identify the benefits.

What is Cultural Authenticity?

There are a lot of definitions for authentic materials. Scientists define authentic materials as materials that are related to texts or audio methods (listening and speaking methods), and these materials are designed for native speakers rather than for language learning. In order for a foreign language student to truly grasp the target language, they must study the culture with the language. If students are to dive into learning a language, they have to commit themselves to learning the culture as well. Relating to the culture will help them clench the concepts being taught. Language and culture go together. You cannot have an understanding of language, without
understanding culture; you cannot understand a culture without understanding its language. Culture and language are inseparable concepts. Cultural authenticity is not easy to define. It is described as knowing something is authentic, because we feel it. When we read a book, and we read a thought or phrase that “hits home,” that is what cultural authenticity is. In a way, while reading or listening, we say to ourselves, “I can relate to that.” In short, the language a student identifies with and relates the material to is cultural authenticity.

- Authentic Materials: Language and culture are intertwined. The materials that teachers use in their classrooms should be linked to both culture and language. Authentic materials include texts, as well as everyday objects within the target culture. They can be in different categories, ranging from bus schedules, to music, road signs to internet websites. Inauthentic materials include course books, dialogues and texts that are used strictly for language teaching. For example, a grammar textbook for English language learners is meant for teaching grammar, and written for instruction. Authentic materials have been defined numerous ways. For instance, Tamo (2009) states that authentic materials provide, “…exposure to real language and its use in its own community” (p 74). He goes on to say that, “Authentic materials are materials that we can use in the classroom and that have not been changed in any way for ESL students” (p. 74). Along similar lines, Harmer (1991) views authentic materials as, “Those which are designed for native speakers: they are ‘real’ texts, designed not for language students, but for the speakers of the language in question. (p. 185)” (as cited in Phillip, 2007, p. 4).

Authentic materials expose students to objects within the target culture, whereas inauthentic materials are used specifically in teaching language. Authentic materials for
ESL/EFL students offer more benefits than inauthentic materials. Authentic materials allow the student to submerge themselves within the culture. With inauthentic materials, the student learns the language, but not the culture, and does not receive any benefit.

- Authentic task: Tomlinson (2011) defines an authentic task as, “A task which involves learners in using language in a way that, replicates its use in the 'real world' outside the language classroom” (p. ix). Authentic tasks in the classroom allow students to react and respond to the real world. Outside the classroom, they give the student the confidence to integrate into the real world and connect with the target culture while practicing the language.

The most important benefit to using cultural products is communication:

Learning about the daily culture of the actual target language helps native speakers. It also allows for one to learn about one's own culture, and the tools required to assist language learners in negotiating meaning and understanding the communicative and cultural texts, in which linguistic codes are used. (Stuart & Nocon, 1996, p. 432)

Authentic materials can be a written text or spoken audio that are for native speakers. Language teachers use these materials to help students communicate more like native speakers. These materials use real situations, and situations that are observable. Students will learn to interpret them easily, as they watch, listen or read the materials, and incorporate the lessons into their everyday life. In return, it also gives them the confidence that they need to act and/or respond to most situations.

Using Culture Products for Language Learning

Freda Mishan (2005) addresses cultural products and the utilization for language learning. These authentic products in Mishan’s work (2005) include literature,
the broadcast media, newspapers, and advertising. Nonetheless, it is safe to say that authentic materials and cultural products are generally the same.

Using authentic materials in language classrooms benefits students in communication, motivation, and practice. Classrooms that do not use these authentic product, do not give learners the benefits that they need. In traditional classes, teachers might get the learners to learn the language, but they never truly understand it. Mishan (2005) argues that the learners in a traditional class can practice the language to an extent, but they are never able to develop their language as well as in classes that use authentic materials. The more genuine and authentic the material used in aiding learning, the more benefits for the learner.

Authentic materials allow the students to develop a much more personal and intimate understanding of their own culture as well as the one that they are acquiring. The most important benefit from using cultural products is communication:

Learning about the daily culture of the actual target language helps native speakers. It also allows for one to learn about one's own culture, and the tools required to assist language learners in negotiating meaning and understanding the communicative and cultural texts, in which linguistic codes are used. (Stuart & Nocon, 1996, p. 432)

Authentic materials are an important tool in encouraging learners to communicate with other people. Authentic materials help learners to understand meaning and communicate effectively and efficiently with native speakers as they watch, listen, or read authentic products, because these materials are made by native speakers and the target for these are native speakers. Kramsch, (2001) argues that these materials help students in communication, but not in an educational process. Learners need to speak, read, write, and understand meaning as much as native speakers:
Communication approaches to language teaching, whether they be of the functional-notional type of the seventies or of the proficiency orientation of the eighties, expose learners as much as possible to spoken or written texts that have not been fabricated for pedagogic purposes. (Kramsch, 2001, p.185)

Products like video, newspaper, or broadcast media give learners background information about the target culture that they are studying. When learners learn the language from authentic products, they will get authentic information that will help them to understand meanings. Sanderson (1999) explains that:

Authentic materials keep students informed about what is happening in the world, so they have an intrinsic educational value. As teachers, we are educators working within the school system, so education and general development are part of our responsibilities. (as cited in Tamo, 2009, p 75)

For example, when English language teachers show a video from the target culture and then integrate this video in a lesson, learners then are able to recognize the life style of the targeted community. They are able to distinguish what to do in a certain situation because they were exposed to a similar situation in the video that they watched. Kramsch (2001) underscores this point, stating that “by making communication more authentic, learners will be able to better understand the speaking customs and ways of life of the target country, and thus behave more appropriately in native speaker environments” (p. 185).

Besides communication, authentic materials are useful pragmatically. Successful classrooms are those that make learners practice the language after they watch, listen, or read authentic materials. For example, when teachers have students participate in conversations after exposure to certain products, students can apply what they learn in a real situation: “A pragmatically oriented educational culture stresses the first goal and measures the effectiveness of language learning against the ability of
learners to participate in socially appropriate verbal exchanges with others” (Kramsch, 2001, p. 183).

Authentic materials also play a role in motivating learners and making the classroom experience fun. Motivation is the underlying factor that gives learners the desire to learn more. For Gardner and Lambert (1972), motivation is the reason that “inside learners” tend to learn and achieve their goals in learning about the target community. “Inside learners” are students that have an insider perspective of the culture. With this perspective, they are more likely to mesh with the target community, and this may increase their desire to learn the language: “Traditionally, motivation is distinguished as stemming from a desire either to integrate with the target language community (integrative motivation), or to achieve a practical goal” (Mishan, 2005, p. 26).

Learners that study outside the target culture don’t benefit from having experiences interacting with real people in the target culture, but they can still benefit from authentic materials. In order for the learners to get the experience as well as the motivation, they need authentic materials. Even though they know they may not be similar to the person depicted in the target language situation, they acquire the knowledge, incorporate it into their everyday lives, or use it when they are speaking the language, traveling or living in the target language culture. Mishan (2005) argues that, Learners studying a language away from the target language country do not usually experience the yearning for integration into the teaching language culture that those studying within it might feel, nor do they have the same incentive to emulate the native speaker. (p 26)

While it is neither guaranteed nor promised, authentic materials may help to motivate the learner to use the target language in proper ways.
• Literature

Written texts are important authentic materials that facilitate the learning process in classrooms. Oxford’s Dictionary (1983) defines literature as, “Writings that are valued for their beauty of form, especially novels and poetry and plays” (as cited in Mishan, 2005, p. 97). The Merriam-Webster dictionary also defines literature as “Writing in prose or verse; especially: writing having excellence of form or expression and expressing ideas of permanent or universal” (as cited in Mishan, 2005, p. 97). Literature has many benefits for language classrooms. It offers learners different types and genres of texts that reflect the English speaking culture. Literature also reflects the country, people, culture, thoughts, ideas, and perspectives, whether in poems, articles, or prose texts. People always write what they feel and what they think. Mishan argues that:

…it literature is the most intense and intrinsically the most dense representation of the culture and the people who comprise. It is the most exhibitionistic and most personal form of culture, the form in which members of societies have exposed ideas, thoughts and desires so strongly felt by some that they have been prepared to suffer or die for them. (2005, p. 112)

Clearly, students learning a language can benefit from using different types of literature in their classrooms.

The most important benefit of using literature in language-based classrooms is in developing reading skills. Utilizing different types of texts in the classroom benefits the students in reading and practicing the language. Learners are able to practice reading in class and understand the meaning of texts that reflect people and perspectives of the target culture. Reading also develops reading skills like skimming and scanning. Learners will be able to read for general ideas as well as for details. Moreover, using written texts
in language classrooms helps learners to increase their speed of reading, even when texts are difficult.

Literature is also useful in teaching understanding as well as comprehension. By using authentic texts in classrooms, learners will be more effective in getting the meaning from context and guessing the meanings of new vocabulary. Teachers can also help them to discuss what they read openly, as well as to use the new vocabulary in discussions. This aids and allows them to develop their own understandings of what they read.

Authentic text materials motivate learners. (Mishan, 2005). When language learners use a variety of texts from the target culture and come to understand these texts, they find that second-language discourse will be easier. Teachers can exploit learners’ responses using “non-verbal response visualization (drawing, description imagined images, acting ...)” (Mishan, 2005, p. 112). These activities also make classrooms fun and help students to enjoy the classroom environment. It also gives students the satisfaction of discovering that reading can be fun, and they will tend to read more, and will strive to learn more as well.

- Broadcast Media

Broadcast Media is one of the media products that can be useful in second language classrooms. Mishan (2005) explains that “The broadcast media—radio and television—have many genres in common; news, current affairs, arts reviews, and entertainment programs such as quiz shows, soaps, and plays” (p. 132).

The most important is television. For many learners, television and the media broadcasts reflect the culture and people that live in a given culture. Television programs are based on people’s thoughts, values, and perspectives: “What makes television such a
valuable resource for learning about culture is that it’s a universal medium with a recognizable set of genres whose familiarity belies the subtle or not so subtle differences between cultures” (Mishan, 2005, p.135). Media broadcasts reflect the target language culture and changes over time as the values of culture change. It also helps learners to compare their values with those in the target culture to increase their cultural awareness.

In addition, television’s value for language and culture learning is in its representation of linguistic and visual aspects of the teaching (Mishan, 2005). Teachers are able to “exploit the universality of broadcast genres to build on learner’s knowledge for the study of both language and culture” (Mishan, 2005, p 140). Students can use the visual components (non-verbal communication, action, and wordless sequences) to build and develop their thoughts about the target culture. Only then can students start to understand more, and combine pictures and speech to build meanings (Mishan, 2005). For example, a teacher can show one of these products in class and ask students to write about what they saw and then discuss what they wrote. These activities help students to take ideas about the target culture and use them to develop the writing and speaking skills. “Television, with its myriad sensory distractions of fast moving colorful images, sounds and music, does not force the viewer to concentrate on the spoken language in order to follow what is happening” (Mishan, 2005, 132). While TV shows and programs contain a lot of movements, pictures, and music; they allow viewers to understand the content of the program without paying attention to the spoken words and reduce their ability to learn the details of the language. However, broadcasts make the classroom interesting for learners. Teachers can help students to enjoy the classroom by showing them a well-chosen educational movie such as short drama series, reality programs and
documentary films. Such shows will not only teach students the spoken language, but will also let them discover the culture taught in a clear and interesting way.

- Newspapers

Newspapers are another authentic material that teachers can utilize to promote language learning. Newspapers are accessible, which means that each learner can get them and read them. Language teachers have to exploit this trait in newspapers.

“Newspapers are the most easily available and accessible of the news media - anyone, anywhere, can buy a newspaper . . . and they are less ephemeral than their broadcast counterparts” (Mishan, 2005, p. 154). Mishan (2005) argues that instructors have to exploit the universality of the contents (news, sports, human interest, letters etc.), and the narrative structure of a news story. When teachers guide their students to read these different genres, and then ask them to focus on how these different kinds of genres build the meanings, they are then able to compare the discourses they represent. This helps students to use what they read in communicating effectively and efficiently. For example, letter writing is different from writing sports news. Each has its own form and function. Moreover, newspaper headlines are unique, and each newspaper has a different discourse type to present the news or story. Students can learn how to write headlines to present any subject, and this helps them to know that each kind of subject has its own style of headline. Grunday (1993) reports that, “Newspapers are the freshest foods in the language classroom and at the same time those with the shortest shelf life” (as cited in Mishan, 2005, p. 145). Clearly, newspapers have an important place in language classrooms, if teachers use them as authentic materials.
• Song and Music

When language teachers focus on different kinds of songs as cultural artifacts, they benefit students learning the language. Language teachers have to exploit the innate predisposition for linking music, rhythm, and language, and the power of the auditory over other senses. The different genres of songs help students to build the mutually supportive melody-lyrics relationship. When students build the link between words and rhythms, they will be able to remember vocabulary and create new meanings for the vocabulary they learn (Mishan, 2005).

For example, after students listen to a piece of music, the teacher can ask them to predict the words omitted from the printed text of the song. If the first part of the song ends with the word *chance*, and the missing words rhyme with the last word of the line, students might predict that *dance* is the next word. This is one example of how teachers can help students learn from different genres and build meaning by using songs. It can also help them in everyday life, as students adapt to a foreign culture. Zwiers (2005) explains how the use of examples affects students’ language in their first or second language: “Appropriate examples can clarify complex concepts for students but examples need to be familiar to them” (Zwiers, 2005, p. 54). Providing examples makes grasping the concept easier for students, i.e., when teachers give students examples, they apply the concept in real life, especially when the examples are related to themselves.

Zwiers also argues that using different kinds of music, motivates learners: “We must remember that students often watch different TV shows, listen to different music, celebrate different holidays, and do different things than teachers do. This means that we must know our students” (Zwiers, 2005, 54). When teachers know their students well,
what they like, and what they are interested in, they will provide examples that relate to the students’ lives.

When students interact with different genres of media, second language discourse will be easier for them, and they will be able to develop listening skills. When learners listen to more authentic music, their ears adapt to the target language as they gain an understanding of the song. This soon becomes second nature, as they listen to the target language through songs.

- Advertising

Advertising reflects a society’s culture. Cook (1992) claims, “Advertising is a prominent discourse type in virtually all contemporary societies” (as cited in Mishan, 2005, p. 182). “In British society it is estimated that by the age of 35, the average person will have seen 150,000 television advertisements, equivalent to 75,000 minutes or two months” (Mishan, 2005, p. 182). Advertising reflects people, cultures, and what consumers like to sell and buy: Corporations base advertising campaigns on each culture’s values to make sure that their products are going to be bought and that people like them. Advertising also reflects people’s life styles and the way that they live, their thinking, values, and even their clothing.

As Douglas (2007) says, “You can tell the ideals of anation by its advertisements” (as cited in Mishan, 2005, p. 185). That’s why language teachers have to exploit these traits in advertising in language classrooms. While students learn from advertisements, they also are adapting to change. As culture changes, so do advertisements. In order to capture the audience, they have to be upbeat, and informative; what students need to understand is that changes in the advertisements for certain products, reflect how the
culture and society is changing as well. While this can offer a somewhat painless transition to what is new and exciting, it can also be confusing for ESL/EFL students. When students have adapted to seeing things a certain way, they are sure they have the culture figured out. Then as time changes, so does culture. While it may feel like going back to square one, in all actuality it helps learners to understand what is going on in the target culture. Mishan (2005) says:

> Advertising is in many ways the litmus paper of society. It has its finger on the pulse of societal change, which it perceives and exploits, thus, arguable, helping to perpetuate it. This is another aspect that makes the advertisement an invaluable part of the language teaching repertoire if learners are to tune into the contemporary target language society. (Mishan, 2005, p. 186)

Beside the cultural benefits of using advertising in language classrooms, advertising is very helpful in developing language skills. The first language skill is basic understanding and comprehension. When teachers show their students advertisements in a language classroom, they strive to help them understand the subliminal messages and analyze moving texts. Moreover, teachers can use advertisements to lead the class in discussions, help students to develop speaking skills, and use the vocabulary.

**The Challenge of Choosing Authentic Materials**

Selecting authentic materials is a challenge for teachers and instructors because these materials are created for native speakers and not for learning purposes. The materials that language teachers most commonly use in language classrooms are newspapers, TV programs, and videos. Berado (2006) argues that the criteria for choosing authentic materials in language classrooms are that the materials have to be easy to understand and simplified.
When teachers choose or create material, they try to make text as possible. They believe that if the materials are easy for learners, language acquisition is going to be easier. Now, the criteria for selecting materials should be authenticity: the more authentic the material is, the more helpful it is going to be for students. “The role of the teacher is not to delude the language learner but to prepare him, giving the awareness and necessary skills so as to understand how the language is actually used” (Berado, 2006, p. 60).

Berado addresses the criteria for choosing language materials and how teachers can know if materials are authentic or not. He provides these general questions to evaluate the texts that teachers use:

- Does the language reflect written or spoken usage?
- Is the language in the text natural or has it been distorted in order to try and include examples of a particular teaching point?
- Can good questions be asked about it or tasks based on it created?
- Does the text make the student want to read for himself, tell himself something he doesn’t know as well as introduce new and relevant ideas? (Berado, 2006, p. 60)

Berado also identifies important factors in choosing authentic reading material:

- Suitability of Content: Does the text interest the student? Is it relevant to the student’s needs? Does it represent the type of material that the student will use outside of the classroom?
- Exploitability: Can the text be exploited for teaching purposes? For what purpose should the text be exploited? What skill/strategies can be developed by exploiting the text?
- Readability: Is the text too easy/difficult for the student? Is it structurally too demanding/complex? How much new vocabulary does it contain? Is it relevant?
- Presentation: Does it look authentic? Is it attractive? Does it grab the student’s attention? Does it make him/her want to read more? (Berado, 2006, p. 63)
Conclusion

It is an important aspect of a student’s education to use authentic materials. Through the use of authentic materials, the education of foreign language students will improve greatly. It is through these materials that teaching fosters a relationship to products that are already present in their lives. As the students’ are exposed to authentic materials through audio or visual aids, they are introduced to products from the foreign culture. This allows students to relate products from the foreign culture to those in their native culture, thus allowing a deeper understanding of the target language culture.

Using authentic materials can only enhance a student’s education. They aid in the learning process, as authentic materials can be used across a wide range of subjects and subject matter. This does not only apply to learning a new language. Therefore, using authentic materials offers positive reinforcement that helps the student in the classroom, as well as out in the real world. In the process, the student gains a better understanding of the target language, as well as his or her culture and practices.
CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATIONS

This research confronts assumptions and explores what we do not know about the impact of teaching the culture alongside language. The purpose of this study is to explore the integration of teaching culture along with language in Saudi Institutes to facilitate intercultural communication and understanding. The English language is considered a universal language, but it faces a major problem. One issue in teaching English today is determining the cultural basis of English as an international language.

Studying language without culture doesn’t develop the knowledge base that students need. During classroom instruction, students should compare their home culture, society, history, language and values to those in the target culture. Practice within the classroom, prepares students for the real world. This thesis offers suggestions and insights as to why learning culture is important while learning a foreign language. It also presents information on the use of authentic materials to help students.

Teaching culture alongside language is vital in foreign language education. In order for students to fully grasp and understand the language being taught, they must also have an understanding of the culture. While students can be taught language, they will not grasp it completely when they have nothing to relate it to; whereas if they learn about the target language’s culture, they will be able to use the language much more efficiently. Culture needs to be taught using authentic materials so that students have the opportunity
to relate aspects of their life and culture, to those in the foreign culture. Therefore, it is recommended that:

1. Administrators/Facilitators should:
   
   - Educate themselves on the culture of the target language (English, in this case), so they may aid in the education of educators as well as students.
   - Promote the use of technological devices and resources to further the education of students and teachers alike.

2. Teachers/Instructors should:
   
   - Use authentic materials such as broadcast media, newspapers, music, television, internet, etc. in lesson plans. This enables students to relate the information to something that is in their lives and to the foreign culture.
   - Seek out, acknowledge and accept each student’s background knowledge and learning rate. Once this is done, a teacher/instructor will be able to teach in a more efficient manner.
   - Seek higher education and other professional development related to culture. This reduces the likelihood of miscommunication. When teaching students, teachers must teach many aspects of culture, including, but not limited to: way of life, beliefs, values, perspectives, ideas, and socially acceptable behavior.
   - Promote and provide resources for technology to allow more access to authentic materials (even if this means encouraging students to go to the library). It is essential to promote the use of technology to gain a more complete understanding of the target culture.
• Utilize the Five C’s (ACTFL, n.d.b) as well as the Five Dimensions of Culture in their lesson plans. These are guidelines for educators to use, rather than curricula. However, when used in teaching, they strengthen students’ understanding of the culture, thus improving their understanding of the language.

• Monitor students’ progress within the classroom setting, frequently.

3. Students should:

• Gain knowledge of the target culture in the language classroom, as well as through accessible authentic materials outside the classroom.

• Access authentic materials to further their education. This enables students to further their learning, and gain a deeper understanding of the culture and language.

• Engage in community events and/or activities in order to gain real life experience as well to practice what they have learned in the classroom.

• Interact with natives as community members, conversational partners, friends, co-workers, and productive members of society.

• Use the language they are learning for their own personal enjoyment. This helps solidify the lessons learned and techniques taught.

Conclusion

For ESL/EFL students to develop a more complete knowledge of the target language, they must also possess general knowledge of the culture as well. This is dependent on the quality, not quantity of education that is available. The information in this thesis does not only apply to successfully learning a new language, but to other
subjects as well. It is vital that students are getting a richer, culturally complete knowledge of the target language.

While studying the English language in Saudi Arabia numerous times, I never felt that I could develop an understanding of the English language. Even though I was getting an education by learning the language, I did not feel I could use it properly. It was only after studying in the United States that I understood the reason why Saudi Arabia was different in teaching the English language.

Saudi Arabia teaches Arabian culture in conjunction with the English language. This does not benefit the students. In the United States, we are taught American culture, alongside the English language, which offers benefits that the teaching in Saudi Arabia does not. We relate to the materials and examples from the culture we study. Therefore, it is safe to assume that one reason that learning English in Saudi Arabia is different from learning English in the United States is because of the materials and examples used in teaching the language and culture.

Changes are needed within Saudi Arabia’s education system. In order to move towards the goal of globalization, Saudi Arabia needs to create English Language Teaching Institutes, which integrate the use of authentic materials into their classrooms. Instead of sending students to the United States or another country to study English, they should invest money in developing these programs. Some of the money that is being used to send students to different countries to study the language would be better spent developing programs and accessing valuable authentic materials.

The language one learns in Saudi Arabia is different than the language students learn in the United States or another country. This is due to the use of authentic
materials and the teaching of culture. Without this vital part of the curricula, a student can never fully grasp the language. The biggest benefit of teaching culture to ESL/EFL students is that they will have the knowledge needed to engage in the new culture. Learning the culture alongside the language gives the student insight into people’s behavior, perspectives, and values.

   English is considered a universal language, but one problem educating ESL/EFL students is determining the cultural basis of the English language. Culture and language are inseparable. Students cannot fully grasp the language without submersing themselves into the culture as well. In order to benefit from successfully engaging within a new culture, and applying the knowledge they gained to the real world, one must study the culture in conjunction with the language.

   There are different approaches to learning culture. For instance, a teacher can use authentic materials in the classroom, so the students can relate to the culture with ease. Teachers can also integrate the five dimensions of culture and use the national standards for foreign language education when they follow the effective instruction sequence.

   Culture is defined in many ways. Culture is not just the history of people or geography of a place. Culture envelops everything that makes a country: history, geography, beliefs, perspectives, behaviors, traditions. Culture truly is everything within a country, more specifically, a community. Moran (2001) hits the nail on the head in his definition of culture: “Culture is the evolving way of life of a group of persons, consisting of shared set of practices associated with a shared set of products, based upon a shared set of perspectives on the world, and set within specific social contexts” (p. 24).
Education is the foundation for success in today’s world. Through education we can work towards the goal of globalization and bridging the international communication gap. In order to bridge intercultural gaps, we need to focus on the development of language education. In particular, we need to focus on learning the cultures of the foreign languages we strive to acquire. Knowledge of the language as well as culture will help us to bridge the gaps in the international community.

It is important to learn culture when learning a language. This aids in lessening miscommunications and misinterpretations. If we choose not to learn culture, messages can be misunderstood, and actions/results then become inappropriate. International students have to be able to integrate within the new culture they live in, so it’s crucial that culture be taught. This is where the education in Saudi Arabia differs from the education in the United States. By learning about the culture, students can learn the language more effectively: “… language study seems senseless if they know nothing about the people who speak it or the country in which it is spoken” (Peck, 2011, “Narrative,” para. 3).

Teaching culture can be a motivational tool as well. Using culturally based activities, such as singing and dancing, can make learning language enjoyable. With culture integrated into the curricula, the student benefits by developing language skills. Not only does learning culture and language aid in the development of communication, it offers insight into different cultures, as well as aiding in the development of positive attitudes towards foreign people (Hinkel, 1993, p. 197). Each community within a culture has its own forms, meanings and use of language.
The main goal of teaching culture in English classes is to develop communication with speakers of that language. It is only through incorporating culture into language learning that the student will develop a cultural understanding of the target culture. This enables learners to engage in society, communicate properly, and respond appropriately. The students need to engage the cultural patterns of the language they are studying.

Culture and language are connected. Learners need knowledge of the culture, and language in order to use the language properly, and to become productive members of society. People are able to express their thoughts and values through language. To better understand the thoughts and values that are hidden in language, one must know the culture. Culture helps shape the way individuals think to a certain extent. The way individuals grow up, as well as the customs they practice are all influenced by their culture. The theory of linguistic relativity and the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis imply that language affects a person’s actions and thoughts. They make the connection of language and culture to learning more concrete: “. . . the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture” (Abisamra, 2001).

The use of cultural products such as art, literature, and music, can help students relate to the culture. They can see and hear products that reflect the target culture. Students and teachers alike need to practice the culture. Cultural knowledge without practice doesn’t help students engage in a new culture, and further hinders their ability to use the knowledge in the correct way. Within each culture, people have their own way of life, and their way of life reflects the values that they hold.
In the language learning classroom, the teacher needs to use other methods to teach culture along with the language. Teachers should incorporate the Five Dimensions of Culture within their lesson plans. Moran (2002) strongly recommends that the Five Dimensions of Culture be taught in language classrooms. These dimensions include products, practice, communities, perspectives, and persons—all of which are important in their own way, for the benefits they offer. Educators should incorporate culture products into their lesson plans to offer foreign language students the chance to relate to the culture through its products. Culture practices can be best described as language, products, social gatherings and people. Content related to the target culture does not benefit students, if they are unable to practice what they have learned. While it may be a challenge for teachers to incorporate this dimension into teaching, they should consider taking the class out in public and having them associate within the target language community. This helps students with communication, as well as interaction with speakers of the target language.

Every community has its own qualities. This is why it is vital to teach students about the different communities within a culture. Each community has its own way of doing things. It is important to educate students about what is socially acceptable—both verbally and physically—within the communities so they know how to integrate within society as a whole, and more specifically, within various communities.

Cultural perspectives are the next dimension. Students benefit from content related to past civilizations and contemporary society. This helps students to gain insights into other people’s beliefs and values, while helping them to better understand their own
culture. It also helps them develop tolerance for others’ beliefs and values, to accept that there are different ways to view the world.

Above all, teachers should educate their students on the people of the culture. People reflect the complex mix of the communities that surround them, and their experiences in the real world. It is through these interactions and experiences that a person develops morals, beliefs, and values that are unique to them. There is an unspoken relationship between communities and the people who reside in them. Communities affect people, and people can affect communities.

Language teachers should also incorporate the “The Five C’s”: “Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities—” (ACTFL, n.d.b, 3), into lesson plans. One of the reasons that people strive to learn another language is for communication purposes. In order to communicate effectively within the target community, one needs to learn how to communicate. Students need to interact in conversations, and feel confident enough to express their thoughts and feelings. With confidence, students should also be able to address small groups, and present information on a variety of subject material. Students need the basics of communication to understand and interpret written and spoken language.

Within a culture, educators and students need to understand that there are relationships that exist within the culture itself. There are relationships between the practices and perspectives of the target culture; the perspectives reflect the practices. There is also a relationship between perspectives and products, and one must understand this as well. The products that a culture uses can change individuals’ perspectives. These relationships need to be understood so that the student can gain insight on the activities of
a community. The learning described here enables the student to form connections within society. With the aim of understanding peoples’ behaviors, perspectives and values, the student needs to learn about the culture. Through the use of language, students can further their knowledge by making choices and venturing out into the real world. They then develop cultural knowledge, which they do not get if they choose to learn only the language. One can only develop insights and viewpoints of a culture through interaction.

With knowledge of the language and culture, students can make comparisons between their native language and the target language, as well as comparisons based solely on culture. Through the use of comparisons, students can understand and accept that there are different ways to view the world, and other people’s actions and behaviors.

Authentic materials are designed for native speakers, rather than language learning. In order to develop a more complete understanding of the English language, learners must balance both language and culture. To meet the goal of achieving a more complete understanding of the English language, culture must be taught. Students will never have knowledge of the language, if culture is not intertwined with the teaching of the language. Authentic materials include cultural products within the target culture. They fall into different categories that range from TV guides to want ads. Authentic materials expose the students to objects within the target culture. They allow students to relate to culture more easily:

Learning about the daily culture of the actual target language helps native speakers. It also allows for one to learn about one's own culture, and the tools required to assist language learners in negotiating meaning and understanding the communicative and cultural texts, in which linguistic codes are used. (Stuart & Nocon, 1996, p. 432)
The main benefit of using authentic materials is communication. Once students have the ability to relate to the culture, using authentic materials as a freeway; they will start to integrate themselves within the community. During the acquisition of a new language, authentic materials permit the students to cultivate a deeper, personal, and intimate understanding of the target culture. Meanwhile, the students own culture, beliefs, values and perspectives are strengthened.

Cultural products like video, newspaper, or broadcast media, offer students background information about the target culture they are studying. When students learn the language from authentic products, they access authentic information that will help them to understand meanings. This is why it is important to incorporate authentic materials into the teaching of ESL/EFL students. The students that practice the language after viewing, reading or hearing authentic products, are the ones who are most successful. The use of authentic materials offers students motivation and an enjoyable educational experience. Students respond well to the use of authentic materials within the classroom. While using them, students increase their desire to learn more. Positive reinforcement for a student is crucial; it motivates students, and makes them strive to learn more.

Through the use of authentic products, students can gain the experience they need in the real world, and increase their motivation to use the language for their own enjoyment. Authentic products provide real scenarios, and although students may not be similar to those depicted, they gain cultural knowledge. This is important in helping students can incorporate it into their everyday lives and use it when they are speaking the language and/or living in the target culture. Selecting authentic materials for use within
the classroom is difficult for educators because the materials are made for native speakers and not for learning purposes. When choosing authentic materials, educators need to make sure that they are easy enough for students to understand and use, while making sure that tasks are also as authentic as possible.

Without the knowledge and skills, Saudi institutions and instructors are unable to teach the English language effectively or efficiently; students will not have the opportunity to obtain the rich, culturally-complete knowledge of the target language.
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