

Teaching Culture to achieve cultural understanding

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I. Warm up: Stereotypes about teaching culture. Do you agree?

- ✓ Teaching a language is exclusively teaching syntax and lexicon culture isn't a component of teaching.
- ✓ Teaching even when teaching a foreign language must focus on the **national** cultural features.
- ✓ The other culture should be taught negatively to strengthen the learner's feeling of the superiority of his/her culture

II. Why teaching culture?

The National Charter of Education and Training specifies that the learners should acquire cultural competencies that would allow them to:

- ✓ *“Consider other cultures and compare them to their own.*
- ✓ *Attain an understanding and appreciation of attitudes and values of other cultures.*
- ✓ *Develop an interest in cross-cultural aspects and other ways of doing things”*

So teaching cultural competencies through teaching language has become necessary to achieve understanding between cultures and the speakers of the same language whatever their race, or ethnicity

III. Goals to be achieved in order to teach cultural understanding

Goal 1 = Interest- The student demonstrates curiosity about the target culture and empathy toward its people.

Goal 2 = Who- The student recognizes that role expectations and other social variables such as age, sex, social class, ethnicity, and place of residence affect the way people speak and behave.

Goal 3 = What- The student realizes that effective communication requires discovering the culturally conditioned images that are evoked in the minds of people when they think, act, and react to the world around them.

Goal 4 = Where and When- The student recognizes that situational variables and convention shape behavior in important ways. (S/he needs to know how people in the target culture act in common mundane and crisis situations)

Goal 5 = Why- The student understands that people generally act the way they do because they are using options society allows for satisfying basic physical and psychological needs, and that cultural patterns are interrelated and tend mutually to support need satisfaction.

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Goal 6 = Exploration- The student can evaluate a generalization about the target culture in terms of the amount of evidence substantiating it, and has the skills needed to locate and organize information about the target culture from the library, the mass media, people, and personal observation

IV. Instructional strategies to teach culture.

- ✓ **Culture capsules** this activity is about the differences between cultures for example the differences between the American and Moroccan eating /clothing/grading habits. The culture capsules are usually leading to a discussion
- ✓ **Quizzes**: quizzes are one of the more successful activity types. Quizzes can be used to test materials that you have previously taught, but they are also useful in learning new information
- ✓ **Proverbs**: Discussion of common proverbs in the target language could focus on how the proverbs are different from or similar to proverbs in the students' native language and how differences might underscore historical and cultural background
- ✓ **Authentic Materials**: Using authentic sources from the native speech community helps to engage students in authentic cultural experiences. Sources can include films, news broadcasts, and television shows; Web sites; and photographs, magazines, newspapers, restaurant menus, travel brochures, and other printed materials. Teachers can adapt their use of authentic materials to suit the age and language proficiency level of the students.

Resources

1. **The National Charter of Education and Training.**
2. ***“Teaching culture strategies and techniques”*** By **Nada AbiSamra** "Seminar in TEFL-Teaching Culture <http://nadabs.tripod.com/culture/>.
3. ***“Culture in Second Language Teaching”*** Elizabeth Peterson and Bronwyn Coltrane, Center for Applied Linguistics Online Resources: Digests December 2003 EDO-FL-03-09
4. ***“Practical Techniques for Teaching Culture in the EFL Classroom”*** Brian Cullen [Cullen \[at\] ks.kyy.nitech.ac.jp](mailto:Cullen[at]ks.kyy.nitech.ac.jp) Nagoya Institute of Technology (Nagoya, Japan) (I-TESL-J
5. Teaching Culture: Perspectives in Practice Boston: Heinle & Heinle Patrick R. Moran (2001)