

The Impact of Cultural Factors in Learning and Education on Iranian EFL Learners

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Abstract—The aim of the present study is to investigate the potential effects cultural factors in learning and Education on Iranian EFL learner both in terms of their attitudes towards the cultural factors and their listening comprehension. A combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods was applied with 64 students. Learning logs, treatment, close ended questionnaires were the means of data collections. The result of data analysis indicated that the researcher's treatment proved to be effective but in varying degrees with different participants. On the basis of the results obtained. It is strongly recommended that foreign language teacher consider. The cultural factors and employ specific teaching techniques that can improve student's English abilities.

Index Terms—cultural theory, cultural awareness and identity, text book, EFL

I. INTRODUCTION

Language is an common system of human. They have some need which Coney by this system, like needs, desires, wishes. People come in to contact by the language system, cultural, and point of view. (Richard et al. 1989)In this regard knowing a language goes far beyond its structure and so does the learning of it .In these terms foreign language learning is a complex process of simultaneous acquisition of a number of competencies like, grammatical competence, communicative competence ... et c. Therefore, foreign language learning is also supposed to establish a change in learner's attitudes toward his/her own culture and towards the target culture. Many teachers have see in as their goal of learning and associate the teaching of culture in to the foreign language educational program (Brooks, 1975).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Culture

Human beings and a have been affable creature. They have always lived in a social group. They can not live alone. Because. They try to live in peace there must have special rules and regulation that lead them to this uniformity in two society. The rules and regulations are called culture. Culture is a set beliefs, attitudes, customs. Behaviors and social habits of a community (Richard et al, 1989). Therefore culture plays an important role in the community. Thus culture is the glue that binds the community together. Culture as defined by (Lado, 1957) is synonymous with the ways of the people. People and acclaimed by the same people when looked up with hesitation or censure by the others and often in about arguments with amazingly little understating of what those ways really are and mean. If a visitor is in the united state to study the style life of American or their culture everybody is delighted to help him. Have an understanding of the way and that culture, but what is shown to the visitor and what people tell him is a different story. How do people know what to show and tell the visitor? If the visitor is near an automobile plant, he will be shown an assembly line and the tourist spots in the city, and perhaps a farm and a school. He will also be told about the well –disposed general. That Americans have been learnt about themselves which my happen to be the same well-disposed generalities that visitor has taught about himself and his culture. Periodically someone preferring to pose as a disjoined intellectual may criticize a thing or two or everything. However, people are preferred helpless to interpret themselves regularly and explained what they do though custom, achieved almost unnoticed from their elders and their cultural environment. People incapability to explain their cultural ways alongside their in capability to explain their language, unless especial study is carried out about it. The paradox lies where the people are able to use the complex structures of their language surprising ease and flexibility, but when someone asks Americans to use between and among, for instance, they will describe the most amazing fiction with the best purpose of telling the truth (Lado, 1957).

B. The Importance of Culture in Language Teaching

It is generally accepted that language is a part of culture and it is very essential attitude in it some scientists pay attention that language, culture would not be possible. Language simultaneously depicts culture and is impressed and shaped by it and in the wide spread sense, it is also symbolic description of people. Science embodies their historical and cultural background as well as their approach to life and their ways of *living and thinking. (Brown, 1999, p.165) tells the two as follows: culture and language are interlocking. They are sophisticatedly inter related so no one can isolate the two without losing the significance of language or culture to put in a nut shell, culture and language and

language are inextricable. Some people describe that language is the reflection of culture in other words, people can learn culture through its language. Another image used to represent language and culture is iceberg. The observable part is language, with an invisible part it culture. The most essential part is indiscernible beneath the surface, is the invisible aspect of culture make a living organism. Language is tissue culture is own blood. Language would be dead without culture and culture would have no shape without language. Many linguists inspect the association between language and culture (Nida, 1998, p.29). Believes that language and culture are two symbolic systems. Everything we say in language and culture has meaning descriptive or associative, denotative or connotative. Every language has its own meaning because it is interrelated with its own culture and culture is more comprehensive than language.

C. Integrative Culture into Language Teaching

People with different cultures can ascribe to bizarre things while using the same language form. For illustration, when a person as an English man says lunch, probably means hamburger or pasta, but a man with different nationality, like, a Chinese will most maybe referring to steam bread or rice. The division of culture from language resulting to culture from Language leading to culture confiscation as being compared with conclusive integration of culture with the English language teaching at different EFL contents. One side of a coin is the disintegration of cultural from the English language in ELT contexts in Iranian EFL classes at different levels of educational system, i.e. from primary up to tertiary levels. The other side of the coin is the integration of culture with language teaching in multifarious contexts. The horrible mutilation of passages, tapes, films, learning and teaching materials as well as English magazines and news paper is the least preventive measure done in ELT context to reduce the probability of culture incursion/ invasion.

The out comes of such disintegration has dismaying effects on EFL learner, since their misunderstandings and misinterpretations of the socio cultural norms of the English langue communicates case them many problems in time of real communication with English native speakers. (Cook, 1999; Kramsch 1998).

The goal of this study is to answer the following questions:

1. What is the EF learners attitude toward the censorship of English book?
2. Does text mutilation have any significant effect on listening comprehension of Iranian EFL learners?

This study wanted to show the reasons behind the disintegration of culture in EFL contexts in Iranian institutions and organization and light on the mutilation of course materials and the impacts it may. Cause on the learners' knowledge & personality.

(Prodromou, 1992) requested what should language teaching be about? And supposed from their answers that there is lot at powerful relationship in learner's mind learning a language and learning about people who speak the language; (ibid: 40).

Linguists and anthropologists have acknowledged that the forms and uses of a language depends on the cultural aspect of the community which means that linguistic competence is not enough for learner to be appropriate in that language (Krasner, 1999). Language learners require to be enlightened, for example, of the culturally applicable ways to speak people, depict gratitude, make request and agree or disagree with someone.

D. Teaching Culture without Pre Conceptions

Culture information should be demonstrated in a non judgmental fashion, it means that, no make difference between the students' native culture and culture taught in the classroom. (Kramsch, 1993) explains the "Third culture" of the language classroom. Kramsch (1993) describes the: "Third culture" of the language classroom- a neutral space that learners can create and use to explore and reflect on their own and the target culture and language some teachers have recognized it effective to express student with object or ideas that are specially to the culture of study and a class should be a neutral space that learners can present and use to explore and reflect on their own and the target culture. Teacher should give the clue to two students about target culture. This could lead into related discussion in the target culture. It is also critical to help student recognize that cultures are not monolithic.

Any type of interaction in any particular culture has a variety of successful behaviors.

Teachers must permits students to learn and explore culture heartedly so that they can interact their own specific and enable them to represent their own voice in the second speck community.

E. Young Adult Attitude towards, Foreign Culture

Professor of English Michael Lessard – Clouston (2000) notices three attitudes of culture. These are 'prevalent', specific, and 'dynamic' aspect. At first, according to (Saville Troike, 1975, p.83) "integrated both immaterial manifestation of culture that are comfortably see and 'non- material' one that are arduous to observe." The culture characteristic are sometimes effortlessly acknowledged and they sometimes disguise behind some behaviors, therefore it is complicated to learn or teach them.

(A daskov & Fashi, 1990, p.3-4) by the distinguishing aspect of culture mean: media, music, literature and cinema. For successful communication family, interaction, ceremony, material condition ... The system and motivation of the learners is another reason for selection of culture topic. They have their own reason and attitudes for their future.

They, themselves are aware of their needs while learning a foreign language (Rod Ellis, 1997, p.75-76) explains instrumental, integrative, regulative, and intrinsic c motivation. Briefly, the first is instrument and very important to find a better job. Students are not interested in more than is necessary to be fluent in the language. The second, is integrative

motivation is critical in students' are interested in the people and culture represented by target language group". For these reasons, learners, culture lesson, arouse them to get better understanding of language and satisfy their needs. Next conclusive motivation is "The cause of L2 achievement."

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Introduction

This chapter aims at the elaboration of some features of the recent study. To brush up what the researcher has gone through in the previous chapters. The research question will be mentioned once again. Then, There will be a brief explanation on the participants and the reason behind their selection. The design, instrumentation, procedures and statistical analyses of the study will be discussed to full detail.

B. Research Question

- Why and in what way, do social and cultural factors influence learning second language.

C. Participants

80 Iranian students at "Shokooh Institute" took part in this study. Having administered a celt test by the institute, the researcher chooses 60 participants. The criterion was to select those who second one standard deviation below and one standard deviation above the mean on the celt. Thus two homogenous groups, control and experimental, were settled in which 30 students participated, both male and female and aged between twenty and thirty.

D. Design

The present research is a combination of qualitative and quantitative stud design. A pre test and post- test quantitative experimental approach has been employed, measuring the effect of the treatment used by the investigator. A questionnaire served as the result.

As the independent variable in this study is personality type, 30 students out of 80, were sent into two of the researchers. Colleague's classes were chosen as the control group of the study. The other 30 students were chosen as the experimental group of the study that were supposed to pass a 2-month treatment period.

Additionally, the researcher aims at identifying the type and degree of relationship between two variables rather than establishing a cause and effect relationship. Therefore, the design after this present study is "quasi-experimental" as recommended by Hatch and Farhady (1981). It should be mentioned that the issue of text- mutilation, the culture integration and culture disintegration and the way of teaching are three variables of this study.

E. Instrumentation

A celt test was administered to the participants in 3 different sessions. The first one (The celt) for measuring their level of proficiency and the other one was taken twice, once at the beginning of the semester as the pre/test of the study and again at the end of the term as the post/test of the study.

Celt

The first instrument which was used by the Institute to measure the language proficiency level of the students, was on original test of English as the foreign language (Celt), a well- known and widely used English language proficiency test.

The test is to be taken in 115 minutes and encompasses three major sections:

1) The structure section consists of 75 items. This type of items involves an incomplete sentence and requires the test taker choose from the four options given for each sentence one which completes it. The time for completing this section is 35 minutes.

2) The vocabulary section consists of 75 items this type of items involves an incomplete sentence and requires the test taker choose from the four options given for each sentence the one which completes it. The time for this section is 35 minutes.

3) The reading comprehension section consists of 24, items. The test takers are supposed to answer to the questions related to 3 different text, each text 8 questions the time allocated to this section is 35 minutes.

The allotment of scores is demonstrated below:

TABLE 3.1
INFORMATION ON THE CEIT TEST

CEIT	NUMBER OF ITEMS
Structure	75
Vocabulary	75
Reading comprehension	24

F. Procedures

CEIT was administered at first, As specified in Tabl 3.1. it consisted of 174 items in three sections: structure vocabulary and Reading comprehension. The subtest, each started with detailed instructions in English, but the participants, native language was used to give explanations and to make sure that they fully understood how to perform

on each part. The students were given 115 minutes to finish the three subtests and they were required to mark their answers on their answer sheets. Based on the scores of the CELT, 60 homogenous participants were selected to take test as the pre/test at the study.

Based on their performing the scores of the control/experimental pre-test were gathered. Two month treatment period was done during the course by teaching the cultural points related to the text mutilation and cultural dis integration only to the experimented group. The book which was used is culled "Extra book" by "miles craven". 10 units of this book had ban worked only with participant of the experimental group and the test of the one/post test were exactly according to the material they had learnt during the term.

Control group did not have any special way of teaching over cultural and text mutilation and just they had a normal procedure of acquiring a general English language course.

After treatment period, the test was taken again as the post – test of the study to both control and experimental and the results, scores and the comparison will be mentioned in following discussion.

G. Data Collection

The CELT subtests were scored by using the original key of correct responses and each correct response was assigned. The total number of the items being 100 and the participants' scores were subtracted from this figure.

This test was managed to be given twice. First at the beginning of the semester as the pre-test of the control and experimental group and after a 2 month of treatment period, as the post –test of these two groups for second time. The result will be mentioned in following discussions.

H. Data Analysis

Pre first step to be taken at this stage was to tabulate the data. Since research questions were dealt with in this study. The statistical procedures had to be performed in two separated series of analysis. The T-Test estimation which is used to show the amount of influence of one variable on the other variable, was done to provide answer to the research questions; never the less the estimation of some fundamental issue like, mean, standard deviation and text reliability was inevitable.

I. Questionnaire

A close – ended questionnaire was administrated it comprised of 32 items and was made up of 5 options. The first corresponded to strongly agree and the fifth to strongly disagree. Because of the uniqueness of this case study the researcher had to design the questions herself based on the intention of the study. Tow teachers as the rater and a professor in the field of education reviewed and approved of questions.

To ascertain that the participants' beliefs and attitudes towards their native culture and the censer ship of English books and text mutilations and the effect on listening comprehension of Iranian EFL learners were clearly depicted.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

In this study has reported a qualitative and quantitative study on the cultural factors from English language teaching and learning context, materials and activities the researcher has carried out a critical linguistic study of the Next series.

Have inside then many cultural values which are explained in detail in chapter three.

In the next step the researcher found out that text books are all written and published under academic standards and supervisions, so there is no need for censorship, further more. There is no points in doing so in order to prevent from cultural invasions, since our students live in a modern world where satellite and internet have paved the way for them to be in contact with other cultures and ideas. They are mature enough to make their own decisions considerably.

This survey has talked round books teaching English and learners of English , therefore . It has some views to add the field and some conclusion.

V. IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study may have different kind of implication, such as sociological implications and pedagogical implications.

A. Sociological Implication

There is a lot of wrong attitude about the phenomenon of cultural attack and cultural impact in our country which is Islamic country. The reason is the distance between our cultural value as an Islamic community from those which western countries live by one of the chief worries of many parents and elders of our society is that children might be appealed by the foreign culture in books designed by writers living in foreign countries.

This research, however represents that cultural integration and disintegration doesn't happen through one book. If these control value are shown in one book which is used for teaching English it does not become part of the learners' belief system they found the book censorship respectable. They insisted that censorship just limits and controls the way people feel and think?

There force, there is no cause for worry.

Those people who want to pressure Islamic culture can rest assured that foreign books. Will not kinder with their work.

B. Implications for Syllabus Design

The findings of this study can be useful in pedagogical respects as well. In fact it can makers in teaching and material development.

Implications for syllabus design and material development.

1. This study shows that next series do contain cultural values. This presentation of values is done in a subtle and clever way. This can be good model. When syllabus designers and material developers start planning books they can take. This possibility in to account. They can include understanding.

The cultural of day – to – day conversational conventions such as greetings, fare wells, forms of address, thanking, making requests, and giving or receiving compliments means more than just being able to produce grammatical sentences.

2. Since this problem of cultural disintegration and teat mutilation has a big impact on learners' second language. They deep down liked uncensored ones better. Moreover, they disliked the idea of having one censor as a super-being to decide to them to read or see. Since our students live in a modern world where satellite and internet have pare the way for them to be in contact with other futures and ideas. In addition, Iranian student, here their own right and at least it should be allowed to know about the fact, so this the least right of human being to know the truth. If we look at foreign books without bias we will see there are positive values form or point of view as well when me are sure that there are many different culture and behaviors around the world and are know that all the countries have their own culture and customs, and they will not harm us. We can then start to use them to improve our learning EFL language.

C. Implications for Teaching

1. This research has shown that teachers are aware of the interdependency of culture and language. They have also shown that they do try to give cultural awareness to their students. These teachers should also come to know about cultural values which are implicitly put into the books so that they will be aware of what they are teaching.

2. When teachers are made aware of the existence such values, then can be asked to give explanations to the student. Teachers can elaborate of the cultural values in their classrooms. They can explain the cultural values to their students along with the causes which gives rise to such values, so that they come to understand the cultures are different and there is a reason for this difference which is usually the needs of those people.

3. Since students do not accept the cultural values in foreign books in to their cultural system, it can be deduced that they have not come to accept it and they hold their own culture in esteem. Teachers therefore have to be very careful not to say anything demeaning, humiliating or do grading about the students' cultural system. Such a mistake will have a very series demotivating effect on the students.

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