



EFL for Culture-bound Students in a Globalizing World: Needs, Fears and Achievements

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Introduction

In the last decade there has been an increasing concern in the challenges that face both the educators and the learners of EFL, whether those of cross-cultural communication in general (e.g. Byram, 2000; Cameron ,D. 2002; Kramsch, 2010; Luke,2005), or of web-based communication in particular (e.g. Kress & Leeuwen, 2001; Warschauer & Kern, 2000), but in no other place is the need for clearly identifying the sensitive and serious issues that have a negative impact on cross-cultural communication, especially those related to economy and identity. The former issue has a basic role in determining specific purposes for studying English but the latter issue orients those purposes, particularly in culture-bound contexts, making them just defensive against 'the other'. The cultural and economic limitations affect the quality of language acquisition and its uses. That is, instead of using English to achieve economic aspirations in the global market, and for practicing a healthy communication in one global language there will be a lot of cultural clashes via this language. In this dialectic between acquiring EFL with a little learning, or precon-



ceived cultural notions of 'the others', and trying to globally communicate lies the focal point of this article.

The Objective

The objective of this article is to find a pedagogical strategy that can help culture-bound students, especially in higher education, to open a door for healthy global communication by designing courses in EFL that answers their needs and abolishes their fears.

At the beginning of this article the author defines the challenges of Globalization for culture-bound contexts in general and for higher education in such contexts in particular. Then, fifty volunteer Yemeni graduate students in Sana'a University, the Department of English (which can exemplify many other culture-bound contexts whether in Asia or Africa, especially the underdeveloped countries) answer a questionnaire conducted by the author, through which the concrete data given by the graduates answer important questions like:

- 1- Why do they want to learn English?
- 2- Where do they find themselves in a globalizing world?

Through the concrete data deducted from their answers the author defines both the needs and the fears in studying English that hinder the students from achieving their aspirations after graduation. According to that definition there will be a pedagogical strategy in which twenty freshmen from the same department participate in it and agree to take a course in literature in classrooms that are transformed into workshops, and where they are called group A. This is not teaching language through literature that uses literature as a tool to teach vocabulary, grammar and the other language skills, but reading the culture in literature while learning the language skills in an attempt to bridge the cultural gap between the students and the cultural content of the lan-





guage qua literature (Kramersch & Kramersch, 2000). Moreover, the students practiced what the author calls the critical cultural engagement (that will be defined in the strategy part of this article) while reading the works of art and acquiring the language. The author taught in that class room and worked as "a guide on the side" rather than as "a sage on the stage" (Fitch as cited in Tella, 1996, p. 6). The rest of the freshmen were called group B, and they continued studying only language courses in teacher-centered classrooms by other teachers. After eleven weeks the freshmen in both groups answered the same question by the author to find out which way in teaching EFL is likely to meet their aspirations after graduation. The author then analyzes the answers given by both groups, and reflects on what specific measures might be taken in teaching EFL in culture-bound contexts to help such students to be positive participants in this world rather than remaining passive receivers who find all kinds of linguistic as well as cultural obstacles in achieving their aspirations.

Global Challenges Facing EFL in Culture-bound Contexts

The incursion of the world market along with the English language, as the two are part and parcel of Globalization, are creating cultural resistance in the way the English language along with its cultural dimensions are comprehended by people who do not speak English in general, and students of English in the developing countries in particular. For instance, the challenges of Globalization in tribal societies become bigger, especially on those who have a strong sense of the geography that constantly connects them to the past, therefore forming the collective identity. People in such societies receive any external culture in any form with a lot of suspicions (Hall, 1973).





Therefore, one of the most important questions that educators in higher education must continuously ask, especially when it comes to teaching a universal language like English, is how to make the learner of English linguistically and culturally adapt in a fast changing world. This question is challenging because English studies will always be constructed variously at various locations, and as Gupta (2009) explains that "Englishness is already not a unitary concept even within Britain; its constructions and ideological placements are constantly proliferating. And Americanness even more so ... but which make perfect sense in their particular contexts" (p. 135). This happens to the English language in its home, so how to deal with it in completely different cultural contexts?

Many universities go through huge changes to accommodate to the new technologies and the increasingly interconnected global economy. Suarez and Hilliard (2004) warn that students who are not well equipped to adapt in a globalizing world "will face diminishing economic opportunity and general well-being" (p. 3). Their hypothesis says that "globalization is de-territorializing the skills and competencies rewards, thereby generating powerful centripetal forces on what students the world over need to know" (p. 6). Education becomes a key cultural structure in acting and reacting with this ever marching Globalization.

Beside Globalization there is the term internationalization that has become a widespread and strategically important phenomenon in higher education. It is a challenge because it means the trans-national mobility of the students and the staff who either comply with or resist the demands of globalization. So, higher education has entered the global market because "there has been strong growth in the cross-





border delivery of education, leading to a substantial market in export and import of higher education products" (Vught, Wende & Westerheijden, 2002, pp. 104-6). Even in America the primary mission of colleges and universities is to prepare students for the workforce and the global market because students increasingly associated university education with getting credentials (Odin, 2004, pp. 147-50).

But, when higher education in weaker countries becomes obliged to respond to global requirements the nation states will be powerless institutions and their role will eventually be to protect and defend the national identity. Castells (1997) warns that local communities constructed through collective action and preserved through collective memory that form their source of identity are usually defensive against the impositions of the global disorder and the uncontrollable, fast-paced change. He says that such communities "build havens, but not heaven" (p.68).

Such a collective memory that is forming the collective identity is found in Yemen, which is a culture-bound society, with a tribal history that may extend for thousands of years B.C. The Yemeni personality embraces in its structure history, geography and religion, all of which form the collective Yemeni tribal identity (Caton, 1986). But, it is believed by the Yemenis that this tribal mentality is flexible, because they think it does not clash with the requirements of the modern state. This mentality, they believe, always seeks a balance between the ancient identity and the constant changes emanated from the dynamics of reality and modernism. Yemeni tribes also believe that they are civilized tribes because they are conscious of their ancient civilization that can even sustain and complete the role of any modern government. They think they can play the role of what is called at the





present time NGOs, Human Rights organizations, environmental institutions, and so forth; such international institutions are considered by Yemenis as suspicious, because as they finance their projects they implement foreign agendas (Al- Kumaim, 2008, pp. 361-2). Kennedy and Danks (2001) explain that in such situations where an "outer power" becomes a threat to the national identity "the nation-state and nationalism continue to provide a pivotal axis around which individuals and collectivities frame their sense of cultural affiliation and feelings of belonging" (p. 1).

All the above mentioned challenges can be summed up in the following question: How to bridge the ever widening gap between the requirements of globalization on the one hand and the identity restrictions and the economy limitations on the other hand while teaching EFL?

As this article argues that teaching EFL without considering the sensitive questions in the learners' culture there will always be the danger of the cultural clashes in their future cross-cultural communication. It is not a simple question of encouraging the students to speak fluent English, or just to find a place in the labor market, but one of producing learned graduates who have the potency to judge, choose and act according to a moral basis. Therefore, both the cultural and the literary aspects that are found in works of art can work as incentives to develop their linguistic and cultural level, for wider knowledge and for a non stop interest in the higher levels of communication. This can be achieved with the students who study the English language in the university level. Teachers of EFL can design a course only when they understand the needs and the fears of the learners in culture-bound contexts.





Investigation: Needs and Fears

In an attempt to solve this conflict between the ever living attachments of identity that create suspicions in culture-bound contexts and the ever widening requirements of globalization fifty Yemeni volunteer graduates of Sana'a University, the Department of English, aged between twenty one and twenty three, answered an investigation conducted by the author in an attempt to:

- a- Add a new dimension of understanding global challenges for culture-bound students.
- b- Test the quality of English of the culture-bound students under the impact of such challenges.
- c- Determine the best strategy of teaching EFL in culture-bound contexts.

By this investigation the author wanted to study the outcome of a four year study of a universal language like English within the economic and cultural bounds.

The fifty volunteer graduate students wrote about their needs in studying English, about the relation between Globalization and studying the English language and how to achieve their aspirations in the dynamics of Globalization. Their answers exposed a sharp dialectic between needs and fears: They *need* to study English for better economic chances, but they *fear* losing their cultural identity in a world of Globalization as shown in the following points:





The Needs:

- We learn English to be involved in the fast exchange of knowledge that is spread in English; we want to take part in such global activities.
- We learn English to find a good job in the global market.
- The English language will help us to understand the global issues.
- We learn English to be able to communicate with the world with confidence.
- To study a foreign culture through its language helps us a lot to communicate globally, but the cultural component is missing in our understanding of this foreign language.

The Fears:

- As the positive things spread with Globalization through the English language so are the negative things; we need to protect our culture.
- Globalization is fruitful for the powerful countries but not so for the weak countries because it enhances our dependence on the others.
- We do not communicate, we just receive all kinds of products of Globalization including the cultural product.
- We have an ancient history and a glorious past so we are afraid Globalization may uproot our culture.
- We do not want to be used just as a tool by the global powers.
- We are afraid to be just consumers of the others' cultures.

On the one hand we find that the linguistic level in English of these graduates is acceptable because before they are allowed to join the English Department they have a qualifying exam that is usually under the supervision of the professors in the department, and one which has become a precondition of enrollment (Taleb, 2005, pp. 3-5). But





on the other hand we find the graduates think in the collective sense, which affirms their collective identity and its demands on their future steps. The demands of identity make the fears and the suspicions alarming and will stabilize the passive product of higher education, especially in the field of language that is expected to be for positive communication. Still, it is interesting to find that the students are aware of the fact that they cannot exist in their own culture without recognizing the other cultures; as Said (1978) explains:

The construction of identity...whether of Orient or Occident, France or Britain; while obviously a repository of distinct collective experiences, is finally a construction ... of opposites and "others" whose actuality is always subject to the continuous interpretation of their differences from "us" (pp. 331-2).

So, the question is: How to help the students bridge the gap between the demanding identity and the global aspirations? The following strategy is an attempt for a solution.

A Pedagogical Strategy: The Critical Cultural Engagement

The following strategy is a qualitative study involving twenty volunteer freshmen in the English Department, Sana'a University, aged between eighteen and nineteen (both genders), who agreed to enroll in a class of literature and they were called group A. The rest of the freshmen continued learning English language in the traditional way by teaching them grammar, linguistics, reading, writing and speaking and were called group B. The objective of this strategy is to make the students critically engaged in the learning process while reading the literary texts by practicing comparisons and contrasts between their own reality and the cultural content of the English language. This





critical cultural engagement (henceforth will be referred to as the CCE) will help culture-bound students to be positive, to cross borders, to see themselves from the outside and to reconsider the "familiar landmarks of [their] thought And the old distinction between the Same and the Other" (Foucault, 1970, p. xv).

Though literature is considered by Hall (1998) as one of the slow messages in cross-cultural communication because unlike headlines and propaganda TV commercials which are fast messages literature takes time to convey any meaning, but for the sake of a healthy learning the slow messages of literature are worth taking enough time. Besides, teachers would use works of art not only as the substance of language where the grammatical and lexical features of the sentences are used as building blocks to communication, but also viewing culture, like grammar, "as an overarching taxonomy or a closed system of significant differences that can be explained as a coherent whole" (Kramsch, 1998). This pedagogical strategy also puts into practice both Byram's suggestion (1991) that learners of a foreign language must be encouraged to develop an analytical mind and the challenge posed by Breen and Candlin (1980) that any syllabus has to emerge from the needs of the moment (p. 95). Here the challenge is bigger because we are not dealing with ethnographic competencies in an English speaking context, but with cross-cultural competencies where the impact of the culture-bound context as a place is taken into major consideration. So, to establish the ground for the future cultural competencies works of art are used here to offer a good opportunity for the students to express themselves and to respond as readers to the ideas in the text (e.g. Swaffar, Arens, & Byrnes, 1991). The educator in this strategy is aware of the students' cultural norms and is accom-





modating to the "interactional style and the interactional demands of the learners" (Throp, 1990).

The literature course that was given to group A contained the following works:

Novels: Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, and Orwell's *Animals Farm*.

(four weeks)

Poetry: Shakespeare's "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day".

Wordsworth's "We are Seven".

Whitman, some selected parts of *Leaves of Grass*.

Frost's "Mending Wall".

(three weeks)

Plays: Shaw's *Arms and the Man*.

Ibsen's *A Doll's House*.

(four weeks)

These works of art are selected for two main reasons: 1- the language used is close to modern sensibility. 2- The subject matter is interesting to the passion and mentality of the youth. So, both the language and the ideas offer a fertile land for positive participation by the students. The students will learn both the structure of the language and its function in particular contexts at the same time. And as the biologist and anthropologist Gregory Bateson (1979) says: "contextual shaping is just another term for grammar" (p. 18).

Comparisons and Contrasts

The educator exploited the following points of emphasis in the works of art mentioned above to stimulate the students to use their simple English to compare and contrast the cultural component of the works



with their own reality. Samples of their written answers are given in the next part.

To start with Jane Austen, her style is always described as an authentic representation of the original English language of the middle class, therefore representing the original English identity. Hymes (1964) suggested that considering the connection between speech and the cultural context is a vital means to understand human relations and human understanding of the world. Therefore, this novel like many other novels that have situational and witty conversations as their main technique is an appropriate means for language teachers to connect vocabulary acquisition and grammar to the cultural context of that language. Besides, there are some interesting issues in the novel that are close to the sensibility of the culture-bound students like the 'marriage market', 'the law of entailment', the rights of women and many other moral and social issues that stimulated the students, both males and females, to think and use their simple English language to compare and contrast such issues with similar Yemeni cultural situations. Most of the students commented a lot on the 'marriage market' and said that they have such a market in Yemen. As for the 'law of entailment' they, especially the female students, expressed their pride in their religion that gives the girls the right to inherit their parents and to be responsible for their own property.

In *Animals Farm* the students learnt about the satirical and ironic language in an interesting fable. They laughed and were asked to write sentences to describe for example the characters that they read about, but they preferred to write simple sentences about the political situation and democracy as practiced in Yemen.





Shakespeare's sonnet broke the barrier of awe between the student and world-wide genius, especially that the subject matter of Shakespeare's sonnet is about love and passion. The teacher observed that the students did not comment a lot on this topic, and of course it was quite obvious that they were hindered by social mores.

Wordsworth's lyrical poetry combines simple language, simple artistic forms along with important human issues like freedom of the individual, human rights and the importance of creative imagination. Again, that was a very vital topic to the students, and they related all of such topics to their religion which, they say, encourages individuals' freedom and human rights.

Whitman is an important voice of freedom, democracy and equality all put in a lyrical simple style and language. The students related those topics with those of Wordsworth and it was almost the same kind of discussion, expressing their admiration for such values.

Frost is famous for being an advocate of human communication, especially in "Mending Wall" where he talks about all kinds of barriers that separate one human being from another and all the barriers in life that prevent people from understanding each other. In this topic the students transformed the personal question of communication in Frost's poem into an international question, especially that their main goal of studying English is to use it for international communication. All of them agreed that most countries have international troubles because they do not understand each other.

In *Arms and the Man* the students learnt about the sarcastic style of Shaw ridiculing the popular romantic conception of the professional soldier's bravery and the pretensions of aristocracy, therefore assessing the author's encouragement of simplicity and honesty in human





communication. In this topic the students compared and contrasted the social situation in Yemen with that of a Western model, especially with issues like social conflict and discrimination. There was an interesting and simple argument between the students who said that the Yemeni society had such problems and the others who disagreed.

In *A Doll's House* the students learnt about the importance of Women's right to be treated as serious and responsible individuals. They, especially the female students, tried to use their English to talk about the status of women in Yemen as it will appear in the sample quotations given below (p.15 of this article). Even the male students tried to use their simple English to comment on the female students' aspirations from the religious and the social perspectives.

This is a process of a critical cultural engagement of both teachers and students to explore differences and respecting them rather than assuming similarities (Bernstein, 1996). This strategy was applied on all the issues raised by the teacher in the classroom, who kept encouraging the students to use their simple language in speaking and writing about the interesting topics they found in the works of art. The teacher corrected the language mistakes and at the same time encouraged them to speak about themselves.

Such interesting themes that are presented in a language which is not too difficult encouraged the students to break more barriers between them and the cultural content of the language, therefore accumulating more vocabulary and more grammatical rules. That is, the students were motivated all the time to look up the difficult words before they attended the class. They were also motivated to write paragraphs that either commented, described or explained what they read. With the teacher correcting the spelling and the grammar in the students' para-





graphs the students learnt more and did their best to avoid repeating the same mistakes. The use of questions like "how" and "why" is powerful and motivational because they demand answers (Tannen, 1984), especially in such a pedagogical method that applies comparisons and contrasts between the learner's reality and the text's.

Achievement Test: A Window or a Door?

After eleven weeks both groups, A and B, answered one question which was: How do you find the western culture as compared to the Arabic culture? The following are four short answers selected from four students, two from each group. Two quotations are selected from group A who practiced the CCE while reading works of art, and two other quotations from group B who studied EFL in a traditional way. Sara and Yusuf belong to group A, whereas Aisha and Kareem belong to group B (all names are pseudo names). The beginning will be the quotations of group B:

Aisha (group B): in my opinion there are a lot of defferences [i.e. differences] between eastern and western countries in customs in religion and education. In the eastern customs if you want to visit some one you must tell him/her and you must give small present. And if you invite some to meal you must give the meal on time. But in the west I don't think they do as east. If some one go to visit his/her friend go without arrangement. The religion in our society is the central thing to make our lows [i.e. laws]. Low is taken from religion, whereas we find a lot of religions in the west. The western society has a different custom in marriage, they don't care about the extended family. Eastern people, especially Arabs don't have these kinds of customs and they care about traditional marriage and family. In my



opinion, I think eastern religion, social mores and rules are safer and better for us. That is why I learn English to defend my religion.

Kareem (group B): There are many differences between eastern people and western people. We can see the world divided to two parts. First, the east world. Second, the west world. Actually when we want to know more about them, we must know about their civilization and how the civilizations are different. The first difference is woman in the east wears scarf to hide her hair because the religion order this. But western countries don't do this thing. Also the western people their education is very good. It is better than eastern people. And they have chances to get a job, but in east it is hard to find a job. But English language will help us to find a job. It is like a window for us to observe what is happening in the world.

Sara (group A): I come from a rich culture and I dream to talk about it in English one day. I have big dreams and I wish to make them true. One big dream is to finish college and find an interesting job that can benefit me, my family and my country. I also dream to travel abroad to see new people learn from them and they learn from me about my country. This is my first year in the college studying English. I can use the internet with more confidence. After making intensive readings and a lot of speaking in the classroom I feel I am opening a new door. I believe this door will take me to more doors, and more learning. There will be a lot of difficulties, but no problem.

Yusuf (group A): Making a lot of participation in the class room help students to know more. I feel I make a right step in my study. I can understand English as an interesting culture and I want them to understand me. We can see western countries stronger than eastern





countries because they are more hard working and more serious than eastern countries. Western countries can affect all the world by their education. Education affects any civilization and make it stronger. The best thing I like in the western culture that its people get their rights for every thing. Reading again and again will develop my language and after three years my English language will give me power to be my self. The English language is very interesting. I am excited. I love to speak English to communicate and to use the internet for communication.

To the educator (the author) who applied this strategy in teaching there is one major and common feature in both groups which is the strong sense of identity: Their religion *is* their identity, but each group expresses it in a completely different feeling. This is what Ivanic (1998) calls the self in academic discourse, which means that writing is an act of identity where the students talk about themselves with socio-culturally shaped subject positions that either challenge the dominant practices and discourses, or expose the beliefs and interests which they embody in academic writing. For example, the word "religion" that stands for identity is repeated six times in the first short answer of group B, which suggests the impact of the demanding collective pressures that will necessarily orient their future cross-cultural communication. Whereas the students in group A have acquired more awareness of their present place as well as the possibility of fruitful future steps. It seems that this healthy feeling in group A is motivating them to reach a better linguistic level with better grammar and better vocabulary along with perspectives of good plans.





What is so remarkable in Sara's quotation (group A) is using a positive metaphor of "opening a door" to describe the English language, and what is striking in Kareem's quotation (group B) is using a negative simile of "like a window" to describe the same language. This is very expressive of the change that occurred to group A. All the students in group A conveyed one major idea about using the English language as a means that will help them to be positive participants in the world of communication by using such positive terms as "practice", "take action", "be involved", "participate", "love", "encouraged", "excited" and so forth. Whereas all the students in group B were still thinking in a mechanical way which is reflected in the chopped sentences and in terms like: "difference", "divided", "don't", "hard", "scarf", "religion", "protect", "must", "order" and many other expressions that convey the negative attitudes towards the others and the alarming feeling of the amount of differences that will necessarily hinder their future steps. They want to learn English either to "protect religion" (i.e. identity) as Aisha says, or to find a job, or use it "like a window" as Kareem says, which suggests that they will be either defenders or observers, but not positive participants. In short, the economy and the identity questions are stressful in group B, whereas the same questions have become under more awareness and light in group A. Culture-bound students need to learn that differences should not cause obstacles and frustrations because as Barland (1998) explains that the more people differ from each other the more they have to teach and learn from each other.

In this strategy of the critical cultural engagement (CCE) that entails comparisons and contrasts we find the students crossing borders, seeing themselves from the outside and learning about 'the other' at the





same time that they learn a foreign language. After practicing the CCE the "familiar land marks" (Foucault, 1960, p. xv) of the students' thoughts will not work as obstacles in their cultural communication, so questions like 'wearing a scarf' and a 'different religion' (or identity) will not work as barriers. This is a socio-cultural linguistic practice by the students where the target language, in its cultural dimension, is assimilated through comparisons and contrasts. This practice will function both as expression of and as metaphor for social processes of meaning making, and one which includes the reception of literary texts as well as the reproduction and critical interpretation of cultural values, attitudes and beliefs. Halliday (1978) finds that "the context plays a part in determining what we say; and what we say plays a part in determining the context. As we learn how to mean, we learn to predict each from the other" (2, 3).

This achievement test offers concrete data to the definition of the intercultural competence in language teaching given by Byram (2000), who finds that someone who has some degree of intercultural competence is someone who is able to see relationships between different cultures and is able to mediate. He adds that a person with intercultural competence is also someone

who has a critical or analytical understanding of (part of) their own and other cultures, someone who is conscious of their own perspective, of the way in which their thinking is culturally determined, rather than believing that their understanding and perspective is natural (p. 9).

In other words, the needs, fears and aspirations of the learners of EFL in the higher education in culture-bound contexts need to be understood before innovating any pedagogical strategy, so that cross-





cultural communication becomes for seeking more understanding of the others rather than for only defending the identity. For this purpose and to reach an acceptable level in intercultural competence such learners need to be encouraged to discuss the cultural component that they read in works of literature and to compare and contrast that cultural content with their own reality for the sake of understanding, not for the sake of evaluation. Besides, in this pedagogical strategy the students were treated as speakers in their own right, not as approximations to monolingual native speakers (Cook, 1999).

Now the students in group A have more curiosity, openness and readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about their own, and they are developing a cultural interaction with more skills of interpreting literary texts and relate them to their own reality. This is a very important critical talent in learning a foreign language in general and a global language like English in particular. They are developing signs of critical cultural awareness, and an ability to practice using English according to that healthy awareness. Such signs can be used as skills for future development while facing constraints of real-time communication. This is the ethics of teaching where teachers do not give rote learning that will never benefit the students at such a time, especially that EFL in higher education must be relevant to historical, sociopolitical, and geographic junctures that address questions of location, globalization, representation, difference and negotiation in particular contexts (Luke, 2005). The objective of this pedagogical strategy as it is mentioned in page 1 of this article has been to help the students to open a door for healthy global engagements in the dynamics of cross-cultural communication and the achievement test has proved its validity.





Measures of EFL in Culture-bound Contexts

In the dynamics of Globalization the main objective of EFL in higher education becomes considering conditions and measures that should be taken when dealing with the sensitive issues in culture-bound contexts.

To help the students achieve their aspirations in finding a good place in this globalizing world they need to learn in the first place while still living in their local context how to integrate and coexist in any society in this global village. And as this paper argues that since learning EFL has become a sine qua non for finding a decent place in this world, the starting point in higher education will be the touchstone by which the quality of the learners is determined. Millions of people speak fluent English, but they cannot communicate in a healthy way, simply because they fail to understand the historical and the cultural backgrounds and the realities that create differences between people. Therefore, learning the culture of the target language is an important starting step towards understanding the differences in the other cultures to develop what Ware and Kramersch (2005) call the 'intercultural stance'. Innovating and practicing a critical cultural engagement (CCE) that should suit every cultural context can be the starting point for such a vital step.

EFL in a Globalizing World: Toward a Healthy Achievement of the Culture-bound Students

What the teachers of EFL, then, need to consider is less the imported theories of language that may increase the sense of alienation in the culture-bound students than innovating pedagogical strategies from



the culture-bound context itself. The innovated pedagogical strategies should answer the realistic needs of the students, to abolish their fears of globalization and to equip them with a humanistic learning that avoids treating the target language as just a technical equipment for communication or for finding a job. By practicing the CCE that entails comparisons and contrasts between the cultural reality of the students and that of the literary text the sensitive issues will stop being stressful and they will learn more about accepting the other different views at the same time that they acquire the language. Moreover, and most important is that the graduates' use of English will not be for defending their identity and refusing the others in this ever marching globalization, but rather will be for attempts to overcome the inevitable differences to reach higher levels in communication.

The challenges of globalization need high energies in both teachers and students. And in culture-bound contexts in particular the students need first to be introduced to the cultural content of the target language in the classroom, which is transformed by the energetic teachers into workshops, before encouraging them to practice communication. This is a necessary process because, as the investigation shows, the students' aspiration after graduation is to be involved economically by having better chances for better jobs without being drifted culturally or to be used as tools by any party through those jobs. Also as the strategy shows the quality of the language that the students has learnt here is positive in terms of the developing structure, vocabulary and most important in the shift in the students' mentality that has changed from relying on passive receiving towards positive cultural participation and seeking more learning and understanding.





By practicing the CCE (critical cultural engagement) in the process of learning EFL the two questions of economy and identity in culture-bound contexts will stop being stressful. That is, in practicing the CCE while learning the target language the graduates will neither feel that they will be just tools serving the powerful nor will they be extremists who build havens to protect their culture in this globalizing world. Encouraging the students to practice a healthy CCE while learning EFL will help them understand better themselves, to answer their needs, abolish their fears and open doors for fruitful achievements.

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