

# The Awareness of Cross-culture in Teaching English in Globalization

Do Thi Khac Binh\*

*Faculty of Foreign Languages, Dong Nai University, Dong Nai Province, Vietnam*

**Abstract:** The paper focuses on the value of communication ability and cross-cultural sensitivity in TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) in a more globally interconnected society. Cross-cultural awareness has always been significant in modern language studies since it is necessary for students to be capable and equipped for intercultural communication. This preparation goes beyond simply teaching linguistic concepts like phonology, morphology, lexicology, and syntax. Lack of culturally relevant communication frequently results in a strange or humorous scenario that causes confusion and miscommunication. In order to fully immerse students in effective intercultural communicative skills, the current article contends that cross-cultural consciousness must be incorporated and developed as a component of the TEFL course program. It is firmly believed that as cross-cultural awareness grows, students will be better able to overcome cultural shock and intercultural communication barriers, compare the target culture with their own, and identify similarities and differences, leading to successful cross-cultural communication issues. Because the students do not speak English as their first language, teaching English as a lingua franca in a cross-cultural setting of globalization presents a number of difficulties. One of these issues is the growth of cross-cultural understanding. In this piece, we provide various remedies for lessening their detrimental consequences.

**Keywords:** intercultural awareness, TEFL, Globalized context, communication skill.

## 1. Introduction

The study of contemporary communication languages must include both cultural assimilation and intercultural awareness. They emphasize how important it is to prepare students for effective cross-cultural communication in the workplace as well as the interdependence of language and culture. Kirkvalidze (2017). The issue of cross-cultural understanding in discourse has evolved as a result of economic globalization, extensive human migration, and a reaction to the multiculturalism conundrum. Edward Hall, a cultural analyst, labeled intercultural communication as a brand-new area in the human sciences in 1959. By the middle of the 1970s, it had merged with communication studies. Cross-border interaction and communication between individuals of various ethnicities is necessary. In doing this, effective communication heavily relies on cross-cultural knowledge and skill. The ability to interact appropriately and successfully with people from various countries "involves the knowledge, motivation, and skills to do

so" according to intercultural communication competence. (Barnett & Lee 2002, p. 208). Actually, intercultural competence is the capacity for appropriate and successful communication across different boundaries.

To prepare students for effective and competent cross-cultural communication, cross-cultural awareness refers to both the straightforward teaching of language skills like phonology, morphology, lexicology, and syntax as well as the fundamental education of cultural knowledge and awareness. p. 85; Kirvalidze, 2008). When communication lacks the appropriate cultural context, it typically results in an unexpected or humorous circumstance that leads to misunderstanding and misinterpretation. Language acquisition is most effective when the nuances of the target culture's language are understood. As a result, it is thought that one of the many paradigms in this complex global view is the cultural sensitivity of language teaching and learning. Nobody who teaches English will advocate for intercultural miscommunication. However, there are several difficulties associated with teaching English in a cross-cultural setting, and it has long been important to investigate these difficulties and solutions to help students improve their weaknesses. In this sense, it is well acknowledged that there are several challenges faced by learners whose first language is not English. This essay concentrates on a select few of them as a result.

## 2. Communication and Cultural Intelligence in a Globalized Context

In the age of globalization, experts, academics, and other people are engaging in vital conversations and striking agreements with members of the same or other discourse groups. In intercultural communication, people are seen to be able to employ bargaining effectively. In this regard, incorporating an intercultural strategy into TEFL may be very beneficial if the teacher is able to meet the needs and demands of the students with the necessary language expertise, fostering the students' intercultural competence through text analysis and comparison to their own culture. Actually, for good dialogue, both sociolinguistic appropriateness and grammatical correctness are required. Even if a performance is verbally and grammatically perfect, it will never be fully effective as communication since it not only fails to produce the intended

\*Corresponding author: [nguyenminhthien0910@gmail.com](mailto:nguyenminhthien0910@gmail.com)

effect.

The goal of teaching intercultural languages is to incorporate linguistic, sociolinguistic, and discourse competence together with foreign knowledge, skills, attitudes, and critical cultural consciousness under the wide definition of intercultural communication competence. Its objective is to help students avoid a breakdown in communication both in the classroom and on the job. It is essential to acquire this talent alongside verbal proficiency since students will need it for cross-cultural conversation where they may encounter linguistic and cultural barriers. The phrase "intercultural competence" really refers to the ability to communicate effectively across cultural boundaries and connect appropriately in a variety of scenarios. International competence must be viewed as a broad skill as a result. Thus, the objective of cultural education is "to assist second language learners in developing the ability to use the target language in culturally appropriate ways for the specific purpose of empathizing and interacting with speakers of the target language." (Barnett & Lee, 2002)

### **3. Multicultural Education Challenges and the Concept of Culture**

In contrast to language, which is a tool used to express culture, according to Hall (1959), culture is something we do and something that unifies us as a society. On Hall's thesis, this concept of culture and its link to language is predicated. Although we use culture to describe culture and we absorb it as we produce it, culture itself is never set. The same as culture, teaching is shaped by and steeped in it. Therefore, it is essential that educators take this into account while planning their lesson plans. Well-established neural networks in culture influence and guide our moods, beliefs, and behaviors without our knowledge. Culture is also subject to change and has both adaptable and immutable components.

Teaching kids about other national or ethnic traditions is simply one goal of multicultural education. It also serves to adapt kids to the idea that other lifestyles, dialects, nations, and points of view exist. In order to make students feel welcomed, important, pleasant, and respectful of people from diverse ethnic and cultural origins, it must also link positive feelings with intercultural interactions. In a TEFL class, students are learning English in an environment that is distinct from their own culture. To put it another way, they are getting a global education. The English language is regarded as the world's lingua franca, and its literary and cultural achievements are cherished and revered on a global scale. Through multicultural literature, students are made aware of the unique contributions that different ethnic groups have made to society. Writing that depicts people from varied socioeconomic origins, with various occupations, and with a diversity of human attributes will be included in a well-rounded English course. 1985 (Norton). In all spheres of society, globalization is growing increasingly evident, claim Kienle and Loyd (2005, p. 580). Bridges for communication have been constructed over continents and seas as barriers between cultures and nations have fallen. Today, the majority of individuals utilize English as their primary form of communication.

In order to prepare students for a global workforce, higher education institutions heavily emphasize the teaching of English as a foreign language. People who can view and comprehend their environment objectively are what we need. They also need to have the right attitudes, abilities, and knowledge. To succeed in the modern multicultural, international workplace environment, they must be aware of cultural differences and exploit this information. This claim is strongly supported by a Timmis survey, which found that the majority of English teachers and students from various countries expressed a desire to speak English in accordance with native speaker standards while at the same time exhibiting a desire to maintain elements of their own culture (Timmis, 2002; p. 242). Thus, multicultural education promotes knowledge and respect for both one's own culture and other cultures. By approaching learning from this angle, educators may help students appreciate the uniqueness of other cultures and view the uniqueness of their own culture as a strength.

It can be challenging to teach a language when the material is tough. Sometimes the material might be a hindrance to learning. The most common moment that different nationalities enter the scene is when someone is learning a new language. This might lead to confusion of many types. For instance, Guest (2002) claims that attempts to describe national characteristics in order to compare and contrast cultures end up oversimplifying and creating caricatures of cultural qualities. There could occasionally be conflicts among the pupils as a result of this. When people are unable to execute all the chores they are accustomed to performing in their everyday life, irritation, worry, and tension may also arise. For instance, it can be challenging for students from diverse cultural backgrounds to fit in with the activities, norms, rituals, and traditions that are present in the courses taught in the English classroom; as a result, dissatisfaction, worry, and stress might arise.

Additionally, students frequently experience cultural shock, which seriously impairs their capacity to succeed. The anxiety and stress reactions known as "culture shock" can occur in people who live in a language and cultural milieu that is markedly different from their own. Schumann's 1978. Cognitive dissonance, ambiguity, unfulfilled expectations, and ego-identity shrinkage are the causes of worry, stress, and the subsequent thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Our identities are based on the particular social and physical environments of our ancestral civilizations. We also leave behind the pillars that support and feed our personalities when we go from that specific confluence of sociocultural and physical environmental variables. The conflict between a person's perceptions of oneself and the outside world is known as cognitive dissonance. Unmet expectations cause uncertainty, concern, anxiety, and tension when we live in a different culture. Additionally, these circumstances make cognitive dissonance worse.

### **4. Some Suggestions to Improve Students' Cultural Awareness**

According to Peterson and Coltrane, language learners need to know to whom to convey what and under what conditions. Consequently, providing linguistic information alone is

insufficient when teaching English as a second or foreign language; intercultural awareness and comprehension must also be included. Peterson and Coltrane (2003), p. 12. Because language and culture are intertwined in so many complex ways, teaching culture becomes an essential part of ELT (English Language Teaching). Language and culture are so linked that "one cannot separate them without losing the significance of either language or culture," which implies that for discourse to be productive, cultural awareness must be viewed as permitting language competency. 138 (JIANG, 1994). Claire Kramsch added that "culture in language teaching is an expendable fifth skill, so to speak, to the teaching of speaking, listening, reading, and writing." p. 26; Kramsch, 1993).

Despite the fact that every teacher has a unique teaching style, there are several cultural, national, and socioeconomic variations in pedagogy. But regardless of fashion, local customs, or setting, "making connections" is a crucial element of efficient instruction everywhere in the world. Making links between the new concepts we are trying to teach students and their prior knowledge and skill set is crucial for nurturing knowledge and enhancing students' skill sets. We will attempt to provide some suggestions that will help both the teaching and learning of English in a cross-cultural setting now that the main areas of issues have been highlighted.

### **5. Cross-cultural Awareness and Motivation Promotion**

Regarding cross-cultural variables, it is crucial to encourage cultural understanding among students of any foreign language. The motivations for learning L2 include ethnic compatibility and cross-cultural problems. Language learners should be conscious of, for instance, the proper methods to greet people, show gratitude, ask for something, and concur with someone. They need to be aware that actions and intonation styles that are acceptable in their own speaking group might be interpreted differently by speakers of the target language. They must comprehend that language use must be connected to other culturally acceptable behaviors in order for dialogue to be effective.

A step toward successful cross-cultural dialogue in the era of globalization is learning about the culture of the target tongue. Everyone agrees that having a critical cultural awareness helps you learn, change, and progress so you can handle the challenges of the current emerging global reality. Oftentimes, international or cross-cultural awareness is used to describe this kind of cultural perception. Communication breakdown and miscommunication may result from a dearth of cross-cultural knowledge. Liton and Qaid, (2016, p. 42) gave discussion of a Chinese girl's conversation with her American beau contains an example of this type of miscommunication.

Incorporating the target language's culture into TEFL is very suggestive in international dialogue because cultural variables rather than linguistic ones typically impede students' understanding. Therefore, it is advised that the English language teaching program should cover and address the intercultural issue in order to help learners develop both their language and intercultural skills in a complex web of interactions between people of different cultural views, beliefs,

values, and practices. To foster international understanding and effective dialogue, students should be introduced to a range of cultural materials from both their own country and other countries in the textbook.

### **6. Linguistic Assistance - Cultural Diversity in Teaching Content**

There has to be a lot of language support for teaching to succeed. Teachers must use and incorporate these resources into their lessons, classroom teaching strategies, and regular interactions with students whether they are native English speakers or not.

Sometimes pupils have trouble comprehending teachers who speak a foreign language. Because of this, linguistic supports should also involve a change in the teacher's language. This entails slowing down the explanation of material, slightly simplifying his or her English, refraining from using slang, jargon, and idiomatic expressions, as well as generally limiting vocabulary and sticking to common words. Additionally, reviewing important terminology before a class or subject or pausing to clarify words as one goes is beneficial for both native and non-native teachers. It is a good idea for the teacher to quickly go over the most crucial ideas with the class and to repeat them numerous times. Last but not least, it's critical to make sure that you can hear the teacher's voice.

It is essential to choose topics for the English training using a multi-cultural approach. A multi-cultural approach must be developed, particularly one that draws parallels between student societies and those of other countries. An English text written by a writer with a similar cultural background to the group of students studying the text may be more culturally accessible than a text written by a writer from a culture that is very distinct from the students' own. A book from a different culture that addresses issues important to the students' own society, on the other hand, might prove to be both understandable and fascinating. Students who participate in multicultural education learn that all ethnic groups have significantly contributed to society. A well-rounded English education should include works of literature that show individuals from various socioeconomic backgrounds, with a variety of professions, and with a variety of human traits. (Norton, 1985).

Utilizing so-called "culture capsules" is essential. Students might be exposed to objects or images that symbolize the target culture. Following then, it is the students' job to learn more about the subject at hand, either by independent research or by receiving pointers to investigate into. They can either talk to the class about the item's cultural importance or write a brief summary. These activities can also serve as a starting point for teachers to discuss more important linguistic, cultural, and historical facets of the materials. In fact, the efficacy of deploying cultural containers depends on this contextualization. It is advantageous for teachers to work together on solutions for lowering obstacles to communication. In this respect, it is advisable to identify the root causes of miscommunication and socially awkward language or behavior that can jar students. People frequently have a keen awareness of how culture affects

the behavior of those from other cultures, but they frequently miss the impact of culture on their own behavior, (Javidan & House, 2001).

Last but not least, instructors are advised to refrain from using certain expressions that might arouse students' national emotions in order to prevent culture shock.

### 7. Conclusion

As a consequence, we have spoken about how language and culture are intricately intertwined and offered some recommendations based on the findings of the research that should help students become more communicative and cross-culturally literate. The course materials for English as a Foreign Language should first cover linguistic and cross-cultural components in order to foster a global learning environment and address any potential issues students may encounter. To prevent cultural conflicts that could emerge from misconceptions, ethnocentrism, and stereotypes, cross-cultural resources that are pertinent to the learners' own values and cultural heritage need to be incorporated into the present course curriculum. Third, EFL instructors must switch from a conventional to an intercultural teaching style. Last but not least, the textbooks for English as a Foreign Language should provide materials that will aid students in improving their conversational skills and understanding of various cultures. The issues covered in the essay and the solutions proposed should be useful to English language teachers as well as pupils.

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