



The Impact of Culture on Language Learning

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Abstract: Language learning is process which may be impacted by culture. Culture may define several points in language learning. Students are expected to be aware of culture or understand it in order to fully grasp the language. The article provides data about the impacts of culture on language learning.

Key words: Communication, Culture, language learning, context and meaning, motivation, cultural competence, authentic materials, News and current events, Social media, TV shows and series, Radio programs, Literature, Online forums and discussion boards

Language learning is a complex process which includes several points that impact on the process, culture is one of the most important ones among them. At present, people are living in global world in which people are having close knits with each other due to different reasons. During this cultural exchange they are familiarizing with new cultural values that people keep in society and learning a language. Furthermore, culture influences on language learning by various ways and these reasons sometimes play crucial role in understanding the language even though it is out of language. Here in this article below we will have a look at the impacts of the culture on language learning process.



Language and culture are inseparable. Language is not just a set of words and grammar rules, but it is also a reflection of the culture of its speakers. When learning a new language, it is essential to understand the cultural context of that language in order to truly master it. In a study titled "Culture in Language Learning and Teaching", researchers found that learners who had a good understanding of the cultural context of the language they were studying demonstrated greater proficiency and were more confident in using the language.

Culture affects communication

Culture influences communication styles, and this can be a significant challenge for language learners. For example, in some cultures, indirect communication is the norm, and people may use vague language or nonverbal cues to convey their message. In other cultures, direct communication is preferred, and people may use straightforward language and tone to communicate their message. Understanding these communication styles and cultural norms can help language learners to communicate more effectively and avoid misunderstandings. Neuliep (2017) discusses how cultural differences can affect communication behaviors and provides examples of how indirect communication is used in certain cultures. Culture not only influences the words and expressions we use, but it also affects the way we communicate and the expectations we have of others in terms of communication. For example, in some cultures, interrupting someone during a conversation is considered rude and disrespectful, while in other cultures, interrupting is seen as a sign of active engagement and interest in the conversation. Tiny-Toomey (1999), suggests that culture impacts more than just the words and expressions we choose when communicating. It also affects the way we organize our messages, the way we understand and interpret messages from others, and our expectations for how others should communicate with us. In other words, cultural differences can impact various aspects of our communication behaviors and attitudes. Additionally, cultural differences can also affect



nonverbal communication, such as gestures, facial expressions, and eye contact. According to Knapp and Hall (2014), cultural differences have a significant impact on nonverbal communication, and people from different cultures may experience misunderstandings when they encounter nonverbal behaviors that they are not familiar with or interpret differently. In other words, cultural diversity can cause variations in nonverbal communication, which can result in misunderstandings and difficulties in cross-cultural interactions. For example, in some cultures, direct eye contact is considered a sign of respect and engagement, while in others, avoiding eye contact is a way of showing respect or deference to authority. These differences in communication styles and expectations can be a significant challenge for language learners, particularly in situations where they are communicating with native speakers of the language. However, by studying the cultural context of the language, learners can gain insights into these differences and adapt their communication style to the cultural norms of the language they are learning. Furthermore, understanding the cultural context of a language can also help learners to develop more meaningful and authentic relationships with native speakers. By showing an interest in the culture and customs of the people who speak the language, learners can build rapport and establish a deeper connection that goes beyond mere language proficiency. Zdenek Salzman, James Stanlaw, and Nobuko Adachi suggest that language and culture are interconnected, and it is essential to comprehend the cultural aspects of a language to communicate effectively. They argue that understanding the cultural context of a language is crucial for effective communication. In short, culture and communication are intertwined, and understanding the cultural context of a language is essential for effective communication and building meaningful relationships with native speakers.

Culture enhances language learning

Learning about the culture of the language you are studying can enhance your language learning experience. By studying the culture, you can gain a deeper understanding



of the language and its use. You can also learn about the history, literature, and art of the culture, which can give you a richer appreciation of the language. Root (2014) states integrating cultural elements into language instruction enables learners to develop a more comprehensive comprehension of the language's structures and usage in various social situations. For example, by studying the culture of Spain, learners of Spanish can gain a better understanding of the significance of the Spanish language in the world, as well as the literature, art, and history of Spain.

1. Provides context and meaning: Language is not just a collection of words and grammar rules; it is also a means of expressing culture. By studying the culture of a language, learners can better understand the context and meaning behind the words and expressions they are learning. This can help learners to communicate more effectively and naturally in the language.
2. Increases motivation: Learning a language can be a challenging and time-consuming process. However, by studying the culture of the language, learners can gain a deeper appreciation of its significance and relevance, which can increase their motivation to learn. For example, a student learning Chinese may find the language more meaningful and exciting when they learn about the rich history and cultural heritage of China.
3. Builds cultural competence: In today's globalized world, cultural competence is an essential skill for success. By studying the culture of the language, learners can develop a better understanding of cultural norms, values, and beliefs. This can help them to navigate cross-cultural interactions with greater sensitivity and awareness.
4. Enriches travel experiences: Language learners who travel to countries where the language they are studying is spoken can greatly benefit from their knowledge of the culture. By understanding the customs, traditions, and social norms of the culture, learners can navigate the country more easily and make deeper connections with local people. In conclusion, learning about the culture of the language you are studying can greatly enhance



your language learning experience. It provides context and meaning, increases motivation, builds cultural competence, and enriches travel experiences. By studying the culture, language learners can gain a deeper appreciation and understanding of the language they are learning and develop a more profound connection with the people who speak it.

Tips for incorporating culture into language learning

Here are some tips for incorporating culture into your language learning:

Read and watch authentic materials: Read books, watch movies, and listen to music that are produced by native speakers of the language. This will give you a better understanding of the culture and the language.

1. News and current events: Reading newspapers, watching news broadcasts, and listening to podcasts from the country or region where the language is spoken can provide insight into the current events and issues that are important to native speakers. This can also help learners to stay up-to-date on the latest vocabulary and idiomatic expressions.
2. Social media: Following native speakers on social media platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok can provide a window into their daily lives and help learners to pick up on slang and informal language.
3. TV shows and series: Watching TV shows and series produced in the language can help learners to familiarize themselves with the accents, intonation, and common phrases used by native speakers. It can also be a fun way to learn about the culture and entertainment industry of the country.
4. Radio programs: Listening to radio programs and talk shows can help learners to improve their listening comprehension skills and pick up on the nuances of the language. It can also be a great way to learn about the culture, politics, and social issues of the country.



5. Literature: Reading books, poems, and short stories written by native speakers can help learners to expand their vocabulary and develop their reading comprehension skills. It can also provide insight into the culture and history of the country.

6. Online forums and discussion boards: Participating in online forums and discussion boards with native speakers can provide an opportunity to practice writing and speaking skills, as well as to learn more about the language and culture in an informal setting. Remember that incorporating culture into your language learning is an ongoing process. Stay open-minded, curious, and willing to explore different aspects of the culture alongside your language studies.

To sum up, being aware of culture of a language is important to learn the language itself. Learners can understand the language deeper and its usage by including cultural knowledge in language learning. It also increases the efficiency of communication and appreciation of culture of the language they are learning. In the present globalization period, cultural awareness is becoming essential. Studying culture of a language help learners not only their language skills but also develop deeper appreciation and understanding of the culture. This helps learners to remove cultural barriers and promote cross-cultural understanding which leads to balanced and inter connected world.

Reference:

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