

Learning English within the Arab Framework: The Significant Role of Cultures

Myasar Mohammed AbdulQader

American University in the Emirates,
Dubai Academic City,
Dubai – UAE

Abstract

This paper discusses the impact of culture on language acquisition, particularly when it comes to learning and teaching English within the Arabic culture. Given this framework, this paper assesses how students' perspectives on learning the English language can be affected by their socio-cultural background, especially given the current realities on anti-Western sentiments in some parts of the Arab world. This paper examines existing literature on the relation of language learning and culture, arriving on an analysis on how this may affect the learning fields such as ESL and LEP arrangements, and English learning programs in some schools in Arab nations. Moreover, this paper also cites some existing English programs, particularly in Kuwait and Abu Dhabi and Dubai in United Arab Emirates, and how English places itself as a language that needs to be strategically learned both inside and outside the classroom. However, it can be observed that despite of the anti-Western sentiments in the Arab world, learning English has become a necessity, despite the conflicting cultural values; this is due to the acknowledgement in some more liberal Arab states to the reality of globalization, and how English has become a main and significant vehicle of expression and communication in the world today. In this regard, learning English becomes more convenient given a substantial insight into the English-speaking culture, although so far English learning has merely become and more acceptable as a medium of translation rather than a holistic language and cultural package.

Introduction

It can be argued that in order to learn another language, it is important to have an understanding of that language's culture to fully comprehend that specific medium of communication. As Fu (2001) further discusses, the study of any language spoken by a people who live under conditions different from our own and who possess a different culture must be carried out in conjunction with a study of their culture and of their environment. This apparently points out the relationship of language and culture, how language goes beyond the technical construction of words, and that in fact, semantics can be mainly driven by cultural influences. Hence, learning the English language can be effectively complemented by cultural elements such as literatures and various products of the media; the other argument remains whether the assimilation of these cultural contexts would be necessary in just learning the language.

This issue may be raised by some English-learning Arab students based on the following observations: one, due to the heightening anti-Western sentiments in their local communities or society, and two, due to the connotation in which the proliferation of English usage may cause a sense of local culture displacement. Pennycook explains the latter argument, as follows (1994, 177):

“In Ozog’s (1989) study of attitudes towards English in the international Islamic University in Malaysia, he suggests that fears towards English are not only legacy of a suspicion towards English as the language of Christian proselytization but are also a consequence of the methods and materials of English language teaching.”

Hence, the hesitation in assimilating the cultural context of learning the English language is due to the content of the materials that are usually conflicting with Arabic or Islamic values. Although people can always use the language as a language *per se*, the cultural dimension of any language cannot be denied. This is because language is dynamic in itself, and this shows in the growing use of jargons and new words and meanings getting introduced with time. These factors may be deemed irrelevant when it comes to learning the basic grammatical and vocabulary structure of English, however, what can be possibly questionable in this arrangement is in the potential lack of appreciation towards the language. Although in reality English is not exactly “the language of Christian proselytization”, nor it is necessary to use strict Western materials to be able to teach and learn English, the language comes with a cultural value that may be instrumental outside the borders of technical learning. This means that what comes with learning another language is a sense of value that is built on understanding its cultural context, and not as a venue in which conflict is created; as Lindblom points out (2003, 96):

“Some politicians and social critics believe that the English class is not an appropriate place to develop values, political opinions, and views of the world. Not only do these views restrict beyond use what English courses can do to develop productive, critical citizens, which is a necessity for a healthy democracy, but they also completely misrepresent what it means to develop literacy. Reading, writing, speaking and listening are inherently communal activities. If we teach students these skills in isolation, we teach them nothing of real use. English teachers do not just *prepare* students for the world; we help students *construct* the world, to understand it in particular ways.”

In a way, this shows that language learning at this point has stepped beyond the bounds of communication and expression as language has also become a means to connect through a wide range of diverse factors. Lindblom’s argument illustrates that learning the English language can strengthen a sense of community in a sense that language awareness *should* come with cultural awareness.

The receptiveness of an Arab English learner towards learning Western cultures in conjunction to learning the language may also have something to do with the society they belong. For example, the attitudes in English learning in Kuwait may be different for Arab immigrants in a Western country such as Canada. Hence, as this research question highlights, the role of cultures in English learning is significant due to the possible conflicts in values that are usually expressed in the content of the learning materials. Interestingly, as this paper further discusses, the external environment is also influential when it comes to this receptiveness in learning Western cultures due to the process of necessary assimilation or integration (Abu-Rabia, 1997).

Language and Culture

The cultural backgrounds of foreign-language learners are significant because this becomes a basis on how language teaching can define its specific methodology. For example, in a cross-cultural study conducted by Park among a culturally diverse group of students in an English class, some specific cultural groups tend to have different approaches they favor more when it comes learning a second language (2002). The study observed the differences among cultural groups such as Asian-Americans, African-Americans, Latin-Americans, and European-Americans, and based on this, the study concludes that such preferences may be helpful when it comes to formulating teaching strategies. El-Dib (2004) attests to this in which the author also mentions that foreign language strategies may also differ based on gender, age, proficiency, ethnicity and styles.

One helpful note on this is the view on the English language itself by these various societies. Most of these societies are starting to understand that the English language has become an international language, and learning it has become necessary and essential. Studies conducted in many Arabic countries such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait assess the attitudes of learners and parents towards learning English as a foreign language found that most of the learners in these countries did not think that English and its culture a threat to their Arabic or Islamic culture values (El-Dib, 2004; Abu-Rabia, 1997). On the other hand, the question on international English textbooks leads to situations of cultural conflict where the norms presented in the texts are in direct conflict with local social and cultural norms. Many Western materials are inappropriate to the Islamic societies and give little considerations to the sociocultural context in which they may be used. Pennycook (1994) cites that British textbooks which are incompatible with Muslims lifestyles and these include: social interaction between men and women, including living together; advertising for boy / girlfriends in personal ads and holiday romances; and social settings that often illustrate boy meets girl scenarios such as parties and pubs. Hence, given that these students have had a pre-established view on their cultural values, the presentation of these materials will definitely create a sense of conflict of what they believe as right within their own realm.

However, this may take a different turn if the Arab student learns English in a multi-cultural setting. For example, the culture in the classroom includes the culture of the learners, teachers and the culture of the environment surrounded the class. Arab immigrants, like other non-Western immigrants, are expected to integrate with the “major” culture of the society they now live in. One particular case is in Canada in which the society is more open and modern. In this case, the values in this non-Arabic society may challenge the conservative values of those who came from Arab countries. A good example is in the role of women in the society, and how women, even the Arabs, have more opportunities than their home country. Because of this, there have been the varying attitudes towards this society they immigrated to since it is a given that their new host country will not adjust to the immigrants’ expectations (Abu-Rabia, 1997). Hence, in a Canadian classroom in which an Arab English learner will also have to learn the language with other students from different ethnic groups, the classroom will not put first the conditions set by the Arab student as these students are learning within the Canadian context. This therefore makes the classroom, in an Arab student’s point of view, seen as a foreign one, and an effort made to create a suitable situation which is consistent with the foreign language atmosphere, the target language could be more assimilated by the learners themselves. The adjustment will have to come from the students, although the teacher may also make certain adjustments in order to prevent the students being alienated by the topics at hand.

As Buttjes and Byram (1990) argue, the early phases of motivation for learning a foreign language can be raised through cultural awareness, and language acquisition can be facilitated through culturally and socially realistic textbook presentation and content. When a foreign learner is aware of cultural knowledge

of the target language he or she can be aware of the language and the teacher should help the students to acquire the culture of the foreign language. As the authors further point out:

"Cultural awareness teaching shares with language awareness a dual purpose of supporting language learning and extending general understanding of the nature of culture." (Buttjes and Byram, 1990, 23)

It can be helpful if the teacher expressed to the students to acquire and accept the foreign language, and it should be explained to them the importance of that language and indicate the reasons for studying it. Therefore, the teacher needs to increase social competence by encouraging an awareness of its culture and sensitivity to differences in social customs and behaviors, and to foster positive attitudes towards other countries and the people who live in them (Lindblom, 2003). There is also the fact that understanding and being able to speak an international language such as English enables them to meet foreigners in their country, in addition to having to travel abroad with confidence, enjoyment, interest, and advantage. The teacher is to awaken an interest in foreign cultures and lifestyles and foster a willingness to see one's culture in a broader context, in addition to making the students understand that learning a foreign language and cultures of the speakers of this language makes them successful in international communication. Corbett (2003) indicates the learners should have the opportunity to appreciate the similarities and differences between their own culture and the culture of the target language they learn. Another important aspect is that teachers of foreign language should concentrate on the cultural differences between mother country and foreign country on a cognitive level because "language is convergent with the rest of cognition" (Bialystok, 2001, 33). In this regard Bialystok (2001) enumerates the three issues in language acquisition: the independence of language from cognitive functions, in which language carries a universal structure; the role of linguistic input, in which the input emerges from social interaction; and the nature of linguistic knowledge, in which linguistic rules are recognized.

It can be observed that the cultural aspect of language learning may also reflect on some cultural foundations; for example, when it comes to addressing elders, people with position or women may differ from one culture to another. The same linguistic rules apply in Arabic which may not be applicable in English, and vice-versa. Hence, the need to recognize the cultural foundations is important because language is not just words and structures, there is also the case of meaning based on usage and tone. In this regard, Arab students may also have to adjust to some dynamics in the English language, for instance, the absence of age-specific addresses other than "sir" and "ma'm", and in some instance, the absence of respect-specific words that may be required in the Arab language usage. The more democratic format of the English language may be also due to its more democratic framework which the Arabic culture highly contrasts. Therefore, other than the issue in terms of learning content, there is also the possibility of differences in language usage itself, and the cultural foundations have much to do with meaning and how language is used as a means of expression.

Learning English in the Arab World

Conflict and Learning

As previously mentioned, one of the challenges in English learning among Arab students have something to do with the learner's attitude towards that English-speaking society, and these conflicts for some Arab students have something to do with culture (Abu-Rabia, 1997). However, this may be also due to the setting in which the foreign language is learned. In Arab countries, for example, learning English has become a necessity because it has become a mode of communication, particularly in more "open" countries or areas such as Kuwait, Abu Dhabi and Dubai. In Kuwait, English is considered as the second official

language (El-Dib, 2004) and a number of expatriates work in Abu Dhabi and Dubai. Doving even mentions that English has become an international political language (1997, 7-8):

“Bodysnatched English is not only used on controversial issues at the highest level of diplomacy. It also shows up in controversies as a daily event whenever English is used as lingua franca the world over. Our time is seeing its increased use, greatly helped by peoples' revolutions or dissenters' protests no matter what mother tongue is behind the speaker's English. Arabs on both sides of the many Middle East conflicts use it, terrorists use it, foreign governments use it, and so on. The whole world seems to be talking on television or radio or on the Internet in English. All this makes international English not necessarily a contribution to peace or understanding. Rather it tends to transform the world's communications into a latter day Babel's Tower when they mirror undercurrents from different cultures and subcultures.”

The degree of conflict in language has more to do with two observed factors: the attitude towards the function of the language and the consequences that might take place as a result of learning the language. Although English is now seen as an important language to learn, for some groups, learning this language is more privately pursued than enforced. Hence, there is a stronger degree of choice whether a student wants to learn English or not. However, what also makes English an important language to learn, particularly to the younger generation, is due to the onset of globalization which has been present in a number of instances (Johnston, 2002). For example, the Internet has become one of the significant tools of today, is dominantly in English (Gilsdorf, 2002). Therefore, although English may present some conflicting issues between the Arab culture, such framework now becomes challenged with the need to learn the language more of because due to the developments in many areas in the world.

A language does not serve as a tool for communication but also a system of representation for perception and thinking. Understanding the way of expressing things is essential and sometimes can cause anger, problems if it is misunderstood by the interlocutor. The interculturally competent person is aware of when interacting with someone originating from the foreign culture, so as not to cause feelings of irritation in one's interlocutor or be irritated by one's interlocutor's behavior. However, this level of understanding makes language and culture learning important, although there is also the case in which some believe that language users only borrow words from the social stock of available signs. Some signs that already have their significances in large part built in, and in this regard there is a greater sense of symbolism at play here. For example, in Kuwait, the advertisements for the American food chain Kentucky Fried Chicken is written both in Arabic and English (El-Dib, 2004). Based on this, some may argue that the foreign learners do not need to study the culture of the society because they can just strictly learn the language. However, there are so many social practices which are shared among human beings that could enhance the foreign learners to develop and acquire the language according to these common social manners.

“Brown (1987:123) points out that a language is a part of a culture and a culture is a part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven such that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture. The acquisition of a second language is also the acquisition of a second culture.” (Malallah: 2000: 19)

As Brown (1987) points out in the abovementioned excerpt, teaching culture is an essential part of teaching a language. This is because language is a way to reflect the world we live in, and sometimes sticking to linguistics and not taking into account culture can lead to misunderstanding. Culture becomes much more important if we want to learn a foreign language for communicative purposes. For example,

‘please’ is always used among British people and it is a part of British culture and teaching learners to be polite will help them to find their way in a different way.

“Purcell (1988) points out that culture is part of the language. To acquire or learn the language, one should understand it. To understand it, one should be acquainted with the cultural features behind it. The acknowledgement of the culture of the FL community may cause cultural change among the learners of the FL.” (Malallah: 2000: 23)

For an English teacher, teaching Arab students in ESL/LEP/TOEFL classes may be a challenge because teaching, particularly in the field of communication or language arts, has to infuse application or realistic elements to make the learning more effective; as Johnston (2002) argues, language teaching is “value-laden” based on the following ideas he enumerated (1):

- The essence of language teaching, like the essence of all teaching, lies in values: That is, it is moral in nature.
- The morality of teaching is highly complex, paradoxical, and saturated with important and difficult dilemmas.
- The moral dimension of teaching has rarely been talked about, and most of the time teachers are not consciously aware of it; yet there is a great need to uncover and examine the values that inform teaching, in the interests both of the professional development of teachers and of the practice of language teaching.

Such information may be also helpful with the data gathered by Abu-Rabia (1997) in which he studied examined the Arab students’ attitudes towards learning English as a second language in which the author surveyed 52 8th grade Canadian-Arab immigrant students, 25 of which were boys and 27 were girls; a summary of the author’s findings are as follows:

- These students’ attitude towards the English as a second language was more instrumental rather than integrative.
- There was a significant attitude based on gender type and its effect on attitude type.
- The females had greater scores as having the more integrative attitude.

Abu-Rabia (1997) further brings up that the differences in attitude types between genders is due to the different roles between men and women in their former societies; the author further cites the following points, explaining (127):

“Analysis of the interviews showed three major themes among the female students and their parents: a) the female students wished to be integrated into the Canadian society; b) all mothers favored Canadian society and helped their daughters to achieve integration; c) all fathers rejected the “modern behavior” of their daughters and forbade them to interact in Canadian society. Results of the interviews clearly supported the results of the self-reported questionnaire, namely, that the integrative attitude of the female Arab students in Canada underlie in second language learning.

Culture and communication are inseparable because culture not only dictates who talks to whom, about what, and how the communication proceeds, it also helps to determine how people encode messages, the meanings they have for messages, and the conditions and circumstances under which various messages may or may not be sent, noticed, or interpreted. An understanding of the target-language’s culture somehow becomes a passport to more effective interaction, which will also affect and create relationships with other English speakers, and these English speakers are individuals that have different socio-cultural practices other than the Arabic culture. The perspective of the fathers and the male students’ towards English language

learning as merely for instrumental purposes for the purpose being able to adapt in a new English-speaking society is a means to preserve their cultures without having to see the Western culture as a threat to their conservative views (Dovring, 1997).

The Need for Global Competence

Byram (1989) argues teachers should teach students the L2 or FL culture in classes when the goal is communicative competence. Not only is culture part and parcel of the process, but the educational value of it within L2/FL education is great and influential. In a way, English has increased its demand in a number of areas and this language has obviously become a central element in the whole process of globalization. Hence, English does not only have its communicative and integrative uses but also it has become instrumental to what the future seems like, especially in the professional and global dimension. Gilsdorf enumerates the following factors what makes English a 'genuinely global language' (2002, 365):

- "Of the top 50 schools in the Financial Times MBA 2001 rankings, 43 are located where English is the mother tongue. Of the remaining seven--INSEAD [Fontainebleau], IMD [Lausanne], IESE [Barcelona], Rotterdam School of Management, Instituto de Empresa [Madrid], SDA Bocconi [Milan], and Hong Kong University of Science and Technology," all except IESE "either teach their full-time MBA in English or offer the opportunity for some elements of the programme to be taught in the school's native language" (Anderson, 2001).
- As of 1998, "Half of all Europeans aged 15 to 24 can now converse in English, according to the European Union. In 1987, only 1 in 3 could do so" (Baker & Dallas, 1998). This percentage continues to rise.
- "English is money" (Pakir, 1997, p. 171). Where investment dollars and pounds have gone, oftentimes English has gone as well.
- About 75 percent of pages on the Web are in English. Machine translation, dependent on embedded rules and algorithms, is rough, sometimes so rough as to be laughable, and translation by a skilled translator is costly. Ideally, sellers and buyers on the Web both need English; that both have it, let alone have it fluently, is not routinely the case. Numbers of non-English users on the Web are rising fast, and as they do, of course, non-English content on the Web will rise (Wallraff, 2000). Still, the Web is one more strong medium of dissemination of English.
- The journal *World Englishes* has been published since 1982. Although business is not its central focus, it touches the dozens of countries using English either as first language, intra-national second language, or international language for a great array of purposes, including business and commerce.

In addition to the widening use of English all over the world, some business and trading hubs in the Arab nations have also increased its demand for English speakers. Since the Arab region significantly contributes in the world economy due to its oil and gas production, the mode of businesses in these hubs have mainly used English as a primary language. For example, Wilkins (2001) cite Abed, et al. (1996) that in United Arab Emirates, 90% of its labor force are made up of expatriates, and these expatriates that come from different language communicate in English. Hence, Arabs who want to take advantage of the global position of its status in the international trading scene will have the competitive advantage. This is why some Arab students now see this opportunity as a good motivation to learn English for their own purposes.

In a way, this can be brought up by the English teacher as to why English is an important language to learn; the degree of necessity, whether it takes place in an Arab nation or in an English-speaking country, has increased. Although the issue of culture remains to be a hindering factor, the professional context of

having to learn English somehow outweighs this challenge; on one hand, it can be observed that those who are open to learn English are those who come from less conservative families or communities in the Arab world, this is why learning Western cultures for them is not that hard (Wilkins, 2001).

English Education in Some Arab Nations

This paper cites two Arab nations that have been open in English teaching: Kuwait and United Arab Emirates (due to its “open cities” Abu Dhabi and Dubai). As previously mentioned, Kuwait considers English as its second official language, and despite the Arabic culture of the nation, Kuwait has long had a cosmopolitan nature among its population (El-Dib, 2004).

In El-Dib’s study (2004), English language learning in Kuwait is more strategic in nature since it is not prohibited in the country; this means that students or people find their own means in order to learn or improve their English skills. In a survey conducted by El-Dib (2004), the following factors were considered as strategic elements in learning or improving the English skills in Kuwait: active naturalistic use of English; metacognitive planning or awareness-of-self strategies; a combination of cognitive and compensation strategies; the utilization of physical action dealing with the senses; affective strategies including attempts at relaxation, giving a self-reward and noticing when one is nervous; and cognitive memory strategies. Among these factors, learning the Western culture as a supplement to language learning is included in the first factor; the table below illustrates how culture-learning places among Kuwaiti English-learners (El-Dib, 2004).

In UAE, the demand for English rises at the tertiary and professional level which is included in the National Examining Board for Supervision and Management (NEBSM). The existence of such program, which is also offered at the Dubai Polytechnic, shows that the demand for English learning among the local citizens or Arabs is more on its professional and practical side. Hence, because of UAE’s two striving business and trading hubs, English is more appreciated. Moreover, the two cities in UAE are considered “open cities” in the Middle East in which non-Arabic cultural and social practices are tolerated.

FACTOR ONE: ACTIVE NATURALISTIC LANGUAGE USE

Item	Loading
11 (cog) I try to talk like native speaker	.545
13 (cog) I use English words I know in different ways	.477
14 (cog) I start conversations in English	.668
15 (cog) I watch TV and movies in English	.514
16 (cog) I read for pleasure in English	.609
17 (cog) I write notes, messages, letters, or reports in English	.503
35 (met) I look for people I can talk to in English	.533
36 (met) I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in English	.559
49 (soc) I ask questions in English	.590
50 (soc) I try to learn about the culture of English speakers	.445

Note: cog = cognitive strategies; met = metacognitive strategies; soc = social strategies

Based on the table above, these learning strategies practiced by sampled Kuwaiti citizens show their more open reception to adapting English as a daily part of their lives; hence, the English language and some components of the Western culture is more practiced in this nation. However, although the UAE may have its open cities, some parts of this country remain conservative; hence, the learning process they need to adopt in order to learn English is based on purpose and not as integrative such as the lifestyle in Kuwait.

Perspectives on Learning English

A significant portion of this study is to also understand why English becomes necessary other than because the language has become a necessity. As it has been established the significance of culture in language learning, it can be observed based on the cited study in Canada that English language learning is indeed influenced by the attitudes towards the language. Another pressing element in this regard is that these immigrants moved to an English-speaking country in which their cultures are fundamentally different from the Arabic culture. Hence, the clash in cultures is seen more on the views of the males rather than the females because in this new society, the women are given more opportunities. This is why they also see English as an opportunity to integrate themselves in the society rather than as an instrumental element of merely being a part of this new society.

In a sample survey formulated by this writer, the following results are summarized, based on 20 sampled students:

- Only 7 students agreed that it is important to study the culture of English-speaking countries; 13 said 'no'.
- On the three reasons given why it is important to learn the cultures of these English-speaking countries, 7 of the students answered "It is important for them to understand other cultures than their own"; 7 also answered "It will help them learn English well"; and 2 also answered "It will make the lessons more interesting".
- For those who answered "no" in the first question, the answers are as follows: 13 students thought that "It is not important for them to understand other cultures than their own"; 7 students also thought that "English is a global language so the culture is irrelevant"; and 10 students thought, "They could lose their own culture".

Based on this sampled survey, the varying attitudes towards the English language as another language that needs to be learned restricts it more as a function rather than see English and its culture as an integral part of learning the language. Hence, this segregates an appreciation towards the language and the culture, in which case English somehow becomes "stripped off" its cultural context and considered more as a vehicle of communication.

However, varying attitudes towards English learning may not necessarily mean that these Arab students do not want to learn English; in a way, since it can be observed that the reason for their learning to language is for the mere purpose of survival, acculturation is something they may be hesitant to partake in, and learning about another culture becomes a first step for this assimilation. Abu-Rabia further summarizes these attitudes as follows (1997, 126):

"Students who possessed sympathetic attitudes (integrative motivation) toward of the target language speakers and their culture were found to be more successful in acquiring the second language than were those with negative attitudes"

Hence, this may pose as a challenge for English teachers in multicultural classrooms. In addition to addressing these attitudes, teachers also have to make sure that the students get to appreciate the language in its entirety; this means that since English is also effective as a vehicle of expression and communication, learning the language merely for technical purposes can be a lesser classroom learning experience. It is also possible that due to the cultural “differences” in the classroom, the teacher may need to practice some sensitivity in terms of selecting material for the learning process, hence, the materials for discussion will be further narrowed down to slimmer choices.

Conclusion: What Educators Can Do

Learning a foreign culture is an indispensable part of learning a foreign language. Without teaching foreign culture it is impossible to develop students' communicative competence, which is, in this writer's opinion, even more important than linguistic competence. This is also to point out that language learning is no longer exclusive because much of this lesson applies to the mode of expression and communication. In this regard, having the knowledge and awareness on other cultures, particularly those of English-speaking ones, also becomes integral to a greater aspect of language learning, and this is in the area of understanding,

“Teaching English has become essential in our society and teaching culture is a part of teaching a foreign language. Language is deeply embedded in a culture. Language and culture are inseparable and that we cannot avoid teaching culture in teaching a language. However, so many theories have been developed, and some relevant research projects have carried out.” (Fu: 2001:361)

One of the simplest examples is with the meals - even if your students know perfectly well the words "breakfast", "lunch", "dinner", "supper", "tea" they will not be able to use them in context correctly unless you give them some cultural background and explain what stands behind each word. The same applies not only to lexical but also to grammatical aspects: the usage of personal pronouns (he/she/ him/her etc) in the light of political correctness and gender issues. These are just few of the numerous examples of interrelation between language and culture. The culture of a given nation and their way of life influences greatly their language. That's why it is essentially important to teach the culture together with teaching the language. As for the ways of doing it, here are some recommendations:

- whenever possible, use authentic language material (newspapers, films, TV programs);
- introduce new lexical units in the context where their hidden culture-dependent meaning becomes explicit;
- invite native speakers to your lessons and let your students interview them;
- if it is technically possible, organize chat-forums between your students and students in Britain, USA etc. or find students in an English-speaking country who would be eager to exchange e-mails with your students;
- encourage your students to apply for student exchange programs

Learning a new language and its corresponding culture does not mean forgetting about one's original culture. Arab students that have had hesitations in learning English along with Western culture experience a hindrance in improving their comprehension and communication skills, and worsen the cultural rift between the Arab world from the Western world.

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