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**USING SONGS IN TEACHING INTERCULTURAL
COMMUNICATION**

Abstract: This article clearly states Usage of songs in teaching intercultural communication, especially the importance of songs in teaching intercultural communication in a foreign language. Types and examples of songs for teaching intercultural communication are presented. It is also shown here that by using this method, language learning students can not only be taught intercultural communication, but also get a lot of information about other nationalities and enrich vocabulary through songs. During the language learning process students learn the importance of intercultural communication and the importance of paying attention to intercultural differences by listening to songs. This shows that it is possible to compare differences in intercultural communication between different nationalities by listening to songs and that it is possible get a lot of information about other nationalities via songs. Moreover, there is given information about points on which one should pay a special attention during learning intercultural communication using songs.

Key words: intercultural communicative competence, intercultural communication, culture, song.

Language cannot be detached from human's life; it almost becomes air to breath. People can do many things such as sharing their feeling and setting information, knowledge and anything they want by using language. It can happen because language is a means of communication that "bridges" one's mind to others'.

English becomes the most widely used in all over the world since most of the source of knowledge is written in English and due to the process of globalization communicating in English has become a need in all fields: science, technology, culture, education, etc. For this reason, teaching in all fields of education, has increased, given that most of the information needed in different places and situations comes in this language. More and more universities are aware of these processes, so that, they are interested to prepare its students and new professionals not only in their specific areas, but also in a

target language. Furthermore, teachers are also interested in improving English students' level. That is partially why my dissertation was focused on using songs in teaching intercultural communication that is an essential issue to develop students' communication competence.

Despite the recommendations of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and the national curricula for language teaching in many countries, the focus of language learning and teacher education is still, to a large extent, the development of grammatical and lexical competence. However, a good knowledge of grammar rules, a rich vocabulary, a few memorized speech acts and cultural facts will not sufficiently help non-native speakers of a foreign language to socialize, negotiate or make friends in the foreign language. Furthermore, native or near native fluency alone will not necessarily help native or non-native speakers of a language to successfully communicate with people from other cultures either.

Culture means different things to different people. It is closely tied to socialization and linguistics reflects different social norms. Being able to interpret body language is essential in understanding people around the world as how one holds oneself is deeply ingrained in our very being; however, verbal communication is the most visible and available expression of that culture. Together, verbal and body language is the soul of the country and the people who speak it.

Stereotyping can become dangerous if we give away our ability to see and judge for ourselves to people who we think competent to overlook complex situations. Possible reactions of the 'stranger' in a foreign culture may be the following:

- ✓ isolation from the rest of society;
- ✓ idealizing, belittling, depreciating the unknown environment;
- ✓ enforcement of one's own attitudes onto the others;
- ✓ communication and interaction to create something new.

If the people in a society are unsure and badly informed about a stranger, with little access to information and also little ability to interpret it, they tend to depend on traditional, inflexible perspectives. Strangeness becomes a threat. If people are sure enough of themselves and of their identity and have sufficient possibilities and the ability to handle and interpret information they are the ones who can win from experiences with the unknown (the stranger).

The three dimensions in assessing ICC are:

1. "**knowledge**" in terms of collective memory, diversity in the ways of living and the sociocultural context of the societies and cultures of the communities in which a language is spoken. It refers to intercultural awareness which involves the understanding of the relation (similarities and distinctive differences) between the world of origin and the world of the target

communities.

2. “**Know-how**” implies at the primary level that the learners are able to function “linguistically” in the target language. Then, they should be able to interact in different contexts of ways of living, to adjust to different contexts as they integrate new experiences and use efficiently communicative competence. Finally, they should develop abilities in order to be able to interpret and negotiate interaction in terms of skills: social (types of conventions), living (routine actions required for daily life), vocational and professional (mental and 26 physical specialised actions to carry out the duties of employment) and leisure (arts, crafts, sports, hobbies). At this stage, intercultural skills imply the ability to use a variety of language strategies in order to communicate with those from other cultures, as well as the capacity to overcome stereotyped relationships.

3. “**Being**” is characterised by the attitudes, motivations, values, beliefs, cognitive styles and personality linked to personal identity. Firstly, it involves cultural competence based on cultural awareness and the understanding of other cultures. It should then lead to critical competence, which requires the appropriation of self-identity and the ability to accept and interpret other cultures. Finally, it also implies a higher level of competence in terms of transcultural competence, the valorisation of otherness and the integration of other values than those of one's own culture. At this stage, the aim is to lead the individual to accept the role of a cultural mediator in situations of tension, misunderstanding or conflicts [1, Lussier, in 5].

Songs might be perceived by some teachers as time fillers, namely activities that one performs when there are five or ten minutes left with nothing to do. Other teachers might consider that songs are appropriate just for certain levels (pre-school or elementary level) or not appropriate at all at school due to the linguistic discourse used and message sent. Tim Murphey [2] states that “music and songs is not really one of the conventional categories of language study (grammar, vocabulary, composition, reading, listening comprehension, conversation, etc.); but it can be the content matter of any of these categories and we can focus on any, or many, of these areas when using songs.” Songs could replace, to a certain degree, the traditional teaching resources such as: literature excerpts, course books, grammar books, etc.

A song could definitely be used in order to learn some grammar structures, new vocabulary items and improve the four skills. But if one wants to think out of the box and take into account the cultural specificity of the target language, then that teacher would be concerned with aspects of language that are generally neglected, or that at best tend to remain peripheral in course materials: intercultural communication, connotation, idiom, the construction of style and tone, rhetorical structure [3,p.427].

Murphey [2,p. 9-10] makes an interesting distinction between the

reasons for which songs are listened to in everyday situations as opposed to a learning environment. Therefore, Murphey indicates some purposes for listening to songs on a daily basis

- sing, hum, whistle, tap, and snap fingers while we listen
- talk about music, lyrics, singer and video clips
- use songs and music to set or change an atmosphere or mood
- use music and song to make internal associations with the people, places and times in our lives, so they become the personal soundtrack of our lives and in a learning environment
- study grammar
- practice selective listening comprehension
- read songs, articles, books for linguistic purposes
- translate songs
- write dialogues using the words of a song
- do role-plays
- dictate songs
- use a song for gap-fill, cloze, or for correction
- teach vocabulary
- break the routine.

The differences are quite considerable, ranging from relaxation to making the effort to learn a foreign learning. Therefore, the use of songs in classrooms might confuse or demotivate students to a certain degree. By focusing only on grammar, vocabulary and translations one might lose one's enthusiasm for sharing and listening to music. A more convenient approach would be that of integrating music, culture and language in the same activity.

Songs present a powerful tool for language learning. No wonder that the idea of using music in a language classroom receives more and more attention by both researchers and practicing language teachers.

Therefore, they should be equipped with the following intercultural skills, as suggested by the Common European Framework:

- the ability to bring the culture of origin and the foreign culture into relation with each other;
- cultural sensitivity and the ability to identify and use a variety of strategies for contact with those from other cultures;
- the capacity to fulfil the role of cultural intermediary between one's own culture and the foreign culture and to deal effectively with intercultural misunderstanding and conflict situations;
- the ability to overcome stereotyped relationships'' [2].

In other words, learners should get accustomed to culturally diverse speech styles, should learn how to negotiate meaning, how to use in their advantage pragmatic knowledge, and how to cope with non-verbal language.

We could conclude this analysis of perspectives between the intricate relationship language vs. culture with another more direct statement. The focus of foreign language learning for general purposes resides in acquiring a set of communicative skills, namely productive and receptive skills.

Before choosing a resource, the teacher should consider the following perspectives:

Self-development:

- Do the materials also involve the learner's emotions in the learning process?

- Do the materials allow for the development of creative and critical thinking skills?

- Do the materials allow scope for the development of a desirable set of attitudes? • Do the materials involve the learners as human beings rather than just language learners?

- Do the materials help build personality and learner voice and give learners an understanding about themselves?

The content of a teaching resource should take into account criteria such as authenticity and cultural sensitivity. Authenticity:

- Do the materials provide extensive exposure to authentic English through purposeful reading and/or listening activities?

- Is the content realistic, reflecting topics and events and texts from the real-world situations?

- Do the texts generate 'real-life' communication process?

Cultural sensitivity:

- Are the materials relevant/suitable/appropriate to the learners' cultural context and sensitive to their values and beliefs?

- Do the materials reflect awareness of and sensitivity to sociocultural variation?

As regards the self-development criterion it can be stated that songs definitely involve learners as human beings rather than just language learners. Whether songs are associated with listening or reading activities, the target language is used for communicative purposes and not for testing acquired knowledge. Songs create emotions, feelings, attitudes towards something that is valuable for the learner. Music tackles various topics ranging from love, identity and freedom to war and politics etc.

We provide some examples of songs that can be listened to in order to engage students in discussions about freedom, feelings or revolutions: Beatles - All You Need is Love, Petula Clark - The Other Man's Grass (Is Always Greener) or, Scorpions - Wind of change. Therefore, it is impossible not to be receptive to music. Students who listen to music that is sung in English are definitely exposed to authentic language use, to different accents, and to

different cultural backgrounds. From this perspective, it can be stated that music reflects sociocultural values and it can be used as a meaningful resource both for observing language use and for generating passionate discussions.

Benefits of using Music

Studies have shown that music...

- improves concentration
- improves memory
- brings a sense of community to a group
- motivates learning
- relaxes people who are overwhelmed or stressed
- makes learning fun
- helps people absorb material

"Music stabilizes mental, physical and emotional rhythms to attain a state of deep concentration and focus in which large amounts of content information can be processed and learned." Chris Brewer, Music and Learning

In order to create cultural texture, we must be careful not to portray the culture as monolithic, nor to only teach the pleasant aspects. Activities and songs should portray different aspects of the culture. In other words, we need to 'sell' different views of the culture to our students. Introducing deliberate contrasts within a culture can be useful. Some different 'selling points' are contrasted below.

- Attractive vs. Shocking
- Similarities vs. Differences
- Dark aspects of culture vs. Bright
- Facts vs. Behaviour
- Historical vs. Modern
- Old people vs. Young people
- City life vs. Country life
- Stated beliefs vs. Actual behaviour

Conclusions

1. The way of using songs in the classroom stimulates the students' awareness of understanding different cultural backgrounds, traditions, music styles, as well as improve their language use and accents energizing students and rewarding good work and behavior.

2. The careful and attractive combination of music and songs can represent a highly effective way of teaching foreign language and make the process challenging, facilitating correct pronunciation, listening and language comprehension skills as well as motivately restless students.

3. Teaching English language with songs is extremely efficient in teaching process because it develops and livens up all the language skills

4. Songs and poetry can be used for a wide variety of ESL learning and

teaching activities. They can start or stimulate discussions on a topic or even become the centre of debate. This is especially true of songs that develop a particular theme.

5. Through a series of practical examples, the effective experience shows participants an interesting and entertaining way of using and exploiting various songs in the classroom as well as performing for their peers.

6. Using songs regularly at the foreign language learning process is a very important way of being closely connected with the language environment and help explain a difficult topic.

7. The presence of music at a language learning process develops the individual growth of the students and interactivity bringing them out of their "shells".

8. The songs and lyrics must be chosen that are good to listen to- not a loud, earsplitting background score overlapping the singer's voice, rather soft renderings with each word, each syllable being clearly articulated.

9. Music is an amazing tool for teaching languages. It can serve a variety of functions in the classroom as well as at home. Music can set a mood. Music can signal a transition from one activity to another. Music can be a bonding experience.

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МӘДЕНИЕТАРАЛЫҚ КОММУНИКАЦИЯНЫ ОҚЫТУДА ӘНДЕРДІҢ ҚОЛДАНЫЛУЫ

Аңдатпа: Берілген мақалада мәдениетаралық коммуникацияны оқытуда әндердің қолданылуы, әсіресе шет тілінде мәдениетаралық коммуникацияны оқытуда әндердің маңыздылығы ашылып жазылған. Мәдениетаралық коммуникацияны оқытуда әндердің түрлері мен мысалдары берілген. Осы әдісті қолдана отырып, тіл меңгеруші

оқушылардың мәдениетаралық коммуникацияны меңгерулерімен қатар ән арқылы өзге ұлт жайлы көптеген мәлімет алуға болатынын және сөздік қорын жақсартуға болатындығы көрсетілген. Оқушының тіл үйренуінде мәдениетаралық коммуникацияның маңызды екені және басқа ұлттардың әнін тыңдағанда өзге ұлттар арасындағы мәдениетаралық коммуникацияның айырмашылықтарына мән беру керек екендігін үйренеді. Ән арқылы өзге ұлт туралы үйренуге болатынын және әндерді тыңдағанда өзге ұлттар арасында мәдениетаралық коммуникацияның айырмашылықтарын салыстыра алатындығы баяндалады. Сонымен бірге мәдениетаралық коммуникацияны оқытуда әндердің қолданылу барысында қандай пункттерге назар аудару керектігі туралы мәліметтер көрсетілген.

Кілт сөздер: мәдениетаралық коммуникативтік құзыреттілік, мәдениетаралық қарым-қатынас, мәдениет, әуен.

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ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЕ ПЕСЕН В ОБУЧЕНИИ МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНОЙ КОММУНИКАЦИИ

Аннотация: В данной статье представлен материал по использованию песен в обучении межкультурной коммуникации, особенно важность песен при обучении межкультурной коммуникации на иностранном языке. Приведены виды и примеры песен для обучения межкультурной коммуникации. Также показано, что с помощью данного метода учеников, изучающих язык, можно не только обучить межкультурной коммуникации, но и получить множество информации о других национальностях и обогатить словарный запас благодаря песням. В процессе изучения языка ученики осваивают важность межкультурной коммуникации и важность обращения внимания на различия межкультурной коммуникации во время прослушивания песен. Здесь показано, что можно сравнить различия межкультурной коммуникации между различными национальностями во время прослушивания песен и что можно получить много информации о других национальностях благодаря песням. Также здесь приведены данные о том, на какие пункты нужно обращать особое внимание во время обучения межкультурной коммуникации, используя песни.

Ключевые слова: межкультурная коммуникативная компетентность, межкультурная коммуникация, культура, музыка.

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