WHY SHOULD WE LEARN CULTURE?

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Culture is everything that peculiar to a society and transfer to next generations materially and morally. It has a sense and meaning that created by people and society along the history.

It is very important and necessary teaching culture of English as a foreign language. Because culture has a very wide meaning. Cristina De Rossi an anthropologist at Barnet and Southgate College in London says that:

"Culture encompasses religion, food, what we wear, how we wear it, our language, marriage, music, what we believe is right or wrong, how we sit at the table, how we greet visitors, how we behave with loved ones, and a million other things."

While culture has so wide content, how teachers could ignore to teach it? Culture and language cannot be separated from each other. Every language has a new lifestyle and thinking style. Teaching a language is a culture transmission at the same time. Without understanding their lifestyle, just by learning their rules of language we do not have a good brilliant command of a language.

This British Culture Class contributed my understanding of English language much better. I did not have such a class before and to know a culture helped me to understand some issues much better. When I was at high school, I read and watched Pride and Prejudice of Jane Austen. It was one of my favourites. After a class I watched and read it again, this time I should admit that it was more meaningful because at that time I did not have any idea about eighteenth and nineteenth century of England. Without culture, I just read it maybe that times it was enough for me that I saw but now I can understand events, situations, attitudes of characters and society much better. Now at least, I have an idea about that term of another country that is amazing.

To deliver our message, our emotions and feelings correctly, we should learn socio-cultural structure of the target language. Because every language has a spirit peculiar to itself. For example our language in daily life we use so different gesture and facial expressions and they have a meaning, except us who can understand us? Every culture has such sign language and it is a part of that society, of that culture.

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We cannot have a proper connection without culture. Every language has its proverbs, idioms, figurative expressions. They are the cultural and linguistic richness of a language. If we do not learn an idiom and try to express it with our own words, it causes lack of expression.

New generations do not care about culture as the time pasts, special days, religious festivals, our values special to our culture such as hospitality and respect to old people etc. To learn a new culture gave me a chance to compare some things between two languages. It provided me to understand the values of my own culture better. Their culture is very different from our culture for example their beliefs, lifestyle, table manners, education system etc. respect to these differences is the most important thing. If you say none of my business, it will be a loss of you.

As the future English teachers, we are going to be more conscious about importance of culture and we will not ignore it. This is not for just class; they should learn how enjoyable acculturation is. They should enjoy while they are learning, they should not see it as a must. Discovering new things, knowing the elements of different cultures is a privilege of our class.

It is a wrong to think that culture is not necessary while teaching a foreign language at schools. Because they will have information about the lifestyle of target culture. They will have information about how social class, sex, and social standing effect the attitudes and speaking of people of target language.

They will learn to compare similarities and differences of their own language and target language.

As the future English teachers we should try to make a sensation of our students. We can use posters, maps, tables, real objects, audio visual aids in addition to them internet, newspaper, magazines, television, films, and music to increase their motivation and eagerness to foreign language.