ESL/EFL classroom and culture: An Indian context

Kamruzzaman Choudhury and Tapash Kakati

Tezpur Central University

Abstract

There is an obvious connection between the structure and content of a language on one hand and the culture of its speech-community including their knowledge, beliefs, customs and values on the other. Without language, culture would not be existing; at the same time, language is influenced and shaped by the very culture. This paper aims at defining culture, its relationship with language and what role it plays in teaching and learning English as Second or foreign language in Indian context. This paper will also explore the necessity of having cultural knowledge while teaching and learning English in ESL/EFL classroom. Moreover, this paper will also highlight on the inseparability of culture and language in second/foreign language teaching/learning, arguing that culture introduction is an effective way to promote students' cultural consciousness and language ability. The scenario of English teaching and the "targeted" culture in Indian ESL/EFL classrooms will also be its one of the major concerns. Furthermore, this paper will explore culture in ESL classrooms focusing on two key points: Firstly, teaching of "culture" in the light of globalization of the English language, and secondly, teaching of English as a second/Foreign Language in the multicultural setting of India.

1. Introduction

English language has become a global language in today's world. As a result, English as Second Language or foreign language is becoming a major area of interest for non-native learners in the countries of Expanding and Outer Circles. But the learning a second or foreign language is not easy. As Lado (1964) listing the aims of learning a foreign language, argued that learners should understand the target culture while learning the language in order to get a good grip and hold over the target language. Lado, the renowned American linguist furthermore explained that the objectives of learning a non-native language as "the ability to use it, understanding its meanings and connotations in terms of the target language and culture, and the ability to understand the speech and writing of natives of the target culture in terms of their great ideas and achievement" (Lado, 1964: 25).

Many linguists, language educators and instructors are of the opinion that the incorporation of culture in language teaching/learning is essential while teaching/learning a foreign or second language. Researchers believe that the teaching of target culture in ESL/EFL classroom is important as it facilitates language learners to connect them in practical language situations.

Although English plays a pivotal role in the educational, administrative, constitutional as well as corporate sector in India, yet learners and teachers in India encounter a number of difficulties involving the teaching of culture in the ESL classroom. The paper highlights on the importance and interesting aspects of culture which can be used in an ESL classroom for teaching culture which will facilitate deeper understanding and learning of the target culture.

1.1. What is Language?

Language and culture are inseparable entities, closely interwoven such that separating one would lead to the loss of meaning of the other. Many linguists and anthropologists are of the view that language, its forms and uses is reflective of the cultural values of the society.

Language learning is not possible without culture; it plays an integral part while learning a language. There is no predefined way of handling cultural issues in a language classroom. The teacher needs to change their ways, attitude and approaches depending upon the learners and their purpose of learning.

Linguistic variation arises due to many factors, and many a times these variations are discussed in terms of differences in culture. Various theorists and linguists views that languages are acquired by the process of cultural transmission, and the linguistic variation is caused because of the existence of different cultures, which actually makes sense when thought about.

1.2. What is Culture?

A 'culture' comprises of the historical patterns and the socially valued characteristics that moulds the lives of people and binds them together. Accumulative in nature, these historical patterns and traditions trigger, intrude, intersperse the process of socialization of human beings.

Culture is not an easy term to define. The difficulty in defining the term arises from the very fact that it is used in multiple contexts. Culture is often believed to be understood as a body of knowledge that people have about a particular society but it is not simply a body of 'knowledge' or idea but a structure of a framework according to which people live their lives.

The studies of cultures around the world have proved that different groups not only have different languages but have very different world views about the world, which are reflected in their languages. In simple terms, Halloween which is a popular culture in the west, finds no such cultural practice in an Indian setting, there is no alternate name for this cultural practice as well. Taking into consideration that culture is reflected by the language, and different world views emerge from different groups, these world views cannot be ignored while studying languages or different linguistic varieties. There are theories emphasizing the connection between language and perspective of the world which offers a broader deterministic relativity.

1.3. Relation between Language and Culture

"Human beings do not live in the objective world alone or alone in the social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society. It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an incidental means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection. The fact of the matter is the 'real world' is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group. No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies lie are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached." Sapir (1985[1929]: 162)

Language and culture are coterminous with humanness of human beings. The ability to articulate language is the sign of evolution of human beings from lesser intelligible primates. Language connected individuals with other individuals and helped socialize, connecting groups with other groups which helped form nations and states. A society incorporates a network of relations which functions through communication. Communication becomes easy with the help of language. Interpersonal and intergroup both set social norms and influence the shaping of social groups.

Socio-political behavior is an essential framework of any language. The societal-cultural diversity influences language politics. In a country like India where there are hundreds of languages spoken with hundreds of dialects across the nation representing the Third-World multilingualism and pluriculturalism, can proceed on its path of development

only through the acceptance of its diversity. As according to the census of 1961, it is found that there are 1652 mother tongues (MT) and a much larger number of dialects. Such is been classified into 300 to 400 languages falls under five language families. The Constitution of India, Vlllth schedule, after the 100th constitutional amendment, December 2003 has confirmed 22 constitutionally recognized official languages along with English which is the associate official language.

2. Influence of globalization in English language classroom in India

The process of globalization has seeped into the roots of the 21ˢᵗ century. Globalization has been the driving force behind many developments and important changes in and around the globe. Increasingly, globalization has played an important role in transforming our teaching and learning experience in classroom and various institutional settings.

The growth of transitional communities is one of its major outcomes. Communities move between two or more countries for political, social or economic needs. These moves between countries and their linguistic influence cannot be ignored. The move even though temporary, grants the family an exposure to learn the language, the children gets the opportunity to learn English and develop academic credentials and contribute to the global market when these families travel to English speaking countries.

Refugees, asylum seekers and those who have moved because of marriage or official recommendations imply a more permanent movement. While there others who moved on a regular basis retaining residency in two or more countries and thus travel in regular intervals to and from their native communities.

These changes and movements in community life have led to the emergence of several remarkable challenges in regard to finding a design and learning site relevant to the learners. The changes in the professional, social, economic, political etc. that a learner faces in order to sustain association with different communities covering national boundaries often finds a way inside a traditional classroom. The heterogeneity of contemporary life outside the classrooms is remodeling classrooms into 'complex communicative space[s] criss-crossed with the traces of other communicative encounters and discourses both intuitional and everyday' (Baynham, 2006: 25).

The challenges they face are many but one that really affects is the challenge of creating sites of learning that fulfills the desires and requirements of vocationally oriented learners whose credentials probably do not meet the amenities of the constantly changing market in the new communities. The biggest challenge in understanding of language and culture learning is the incorporation of new visual technologies in our social world. These varieties of arrangements by media have not only maximized but have also brought about multitude of possibilities to socialize, conduct business and learning. These new possibilities are shaping our way about how and what we learn about languages and cultures.

2.1. Influence of Culture in a language classroom

Teaching a language without coming face to face with social milieu which have connection with language and language learning is not possible. Be it language education or social science, the language and society are in countless ways closely connected. Yet, while language teaching has been in terms with linguistics and psychology for a long time, the interaction between social science and language teaching is only a recent phenomenon. The cause behind this delayed recognition lies partially in the history of the discipline themselves and partly in the growth of language teaching theories.

The language input is of utmost importance in a successful learning of a second language. Lack of input would definitely explain the reason behind an unsuccessful learning of a second language. It is often seen that the L2 input chiefly in ESL/EFL context is

inadequate, contrasted to L1 learning, and even devoid of quality in some instance. Taking such situations into consideration, the teaching of culture suits the need of importing an immediate and genuine exposure to L2. There are various views given my many scholars and linguists about whether culture should be taught in a second language classroom.

2.2. Competence in communication

Language is a tool to facilitate a meaningful communication. The main motive behind learning a language is to communicate or interact with others. Many language theorists and researchers were of the view that culture and language are inseparable. According to Kuo and Lai (2006), language incorporates within itself a number of dimensions such as "grammatical competence, communicative competence, language proficiency and cultural understanding" (p.6). They were of the view that learning a second language is not about knowing the syntactic structure, having correct knowledge about grammar, learning new words, or about giving speeches, but it also requires having the knowledge of using the language in an appropriate setting and transfer message without creating any misunderstanding. Linguistic competence and communicative competence are not the same; a clear distinction has been made by Brown (2007), the first is all about the knowledge of language forms whereas the latter is that knowledge which facilitates a learner to communicate practically and interactively. The objective of communicative competence is to make a learner achieve that level of expertise in the targeted language which would help the learner in establishing meaningful interaction in real life situation with other speakers. According to Lessard Clouston (1997), "culture is the foundation of communication" (Language Teaching section, Para.4), and when there is no culture one cannot understand the lives and motivation of a different community neither their interest nor their concerns.

Culture is also important because as some scholars argue that teachers need to teach culture in ESL classroom so as to avoid misinterpretation of the targeted language during communication. According to Moran (2001) the possibilities of culture teaching and learning can be many such as culture understanding, culture awareness, culture adaptation, motivation, integration, language proficiency etc. Moran even holds the view that it is not easy to communicate successfully and there can be problems even while communicating with people from the native language. When individual from different culture and languages comes in terms with each other there are far greater risks of misinterpreting one another.

In order to communicate effectively, a speaker must not only have the knowledge about grammar and vocabulary, but also should know how to use them aptly like having the essential knowledge about the usage of an appropriate tone in a particular context or situation.

3. Culture teaching devices in an ESL classroom

In ESL/EFL classroom, cultural actions and activities should be included carefully in an organized form and later incorporated into lesson plans to enhance the teaching content. One of the usual means of presenting the cultural information has been by exposition and explanation. For this method, teachers could choose to talk the literature, the art, the customs or conventions, the societal norms, the history, the geography, the scientific achievements and the minute information about the people of native speaker. These culture talks could be part of their subject teaching or some particular topics mainly for targeted culture teaching. In the following section, a few useful ideas for presenting culture in the classroom are described.

3.1. Authentic Materials

The use of authentic sources from the native communities can help ESL/EFL learners to get involved with the 'target' cultural experiences. Such sources can contain television, films and news shows; websites; and photographs, magazines, newspapers, restaurant menus,

travel brochures, and other printed materials. The ESL/EFL teachers can familiarize the ESL learners with the use of abovementioned authentic materials to suit the age and language proficiency level of learners. In the process, learners might express the behaviors they observe and talk about which of them are alike to their own culture and which are alien, and thus determine approaches for effective communication in the 'target' language.

3.1.1. Songs and Dances

Songs and dances can also play a role while teaching culture in ESL/EFL classroom. The kinds of songs or dances people opt in moments of pleasure, in moments of passion, or in moments of misery reflect the things they honor, the things that interest them, and the thing they worry. Learners are affectionate of such knowledge when they are given the chance to feel the foreign customs or traditions with appropriate stroke and feeling, and of course, it is responsibility of teachers to take such opportunities to teach learners within a definite background of discussion, account and illustration which will inhale cultural life into them.

3.1.2. Films

Television show and film pieces present students a prospect to witness behaviors that are not obvious in the form of texts. It is observed that films or any sort of videos are often one of the more current and comprehensive ways to encapsulate the expression, experience, and situation of a culture by connecting learners with language and cultural concerns simultaneously because of interchanging roles in a conversation (Stephens, 2001).

3.1.3. Literature

Any text of literature is often loaded with cultural details and suggests impressive reactions for readers. Texts that are carefully selected for a given group of students and with specific goals in mind can be very helpful in allowing students to acquire insight into a culture.

3.1.4 Newspaper

Newspaper is also a resource replete with cultural information. News may be recorded from short-wave broadcasts and that can make accessible everyday in the English magazines and newspapers, or more suitably can be downloaded from the internet.

4. Methodology

The main purpose of this study was to investigate perception and attitudes towards the teaching and learning of culture in ESL classroom in the multilingual and multicultural context of India. The study aimed to look at the role of teaching and learning English as Second Language in Indian context. It will also look at the necessity of having cultural knowledge while teaching and learning English in ESL classroom. Moreover, the study also effort to explore the idea of teaching culture in the light of globalization of English language in the multiple setting of India. Thus, the study aimed to provide answers to the following research questions:
1. Do English teachers in India teach targeted culture in ESL classrooms?
2. If they do, whose culture do they teach?
3. How do the teachers incorporate cultural information into their teaching to the learners?
4. Whose cultures do ESL learners want to learn about in their English language classroom?
5. What specific aspects of culture would the students like to learn and why?

In order to achieve the purpose of this study, a combination of quantitative and qualitative data-collection methods were employed: surveys for learners and teachers to gather data and explore opinions, and interviews for learners and teachers to gain further

insights into their view points and attitudes toward culture teaching and learning in ESL classrooms. English was used in interviewing the teachers while both English and the native language were used to address the students to help them better understand the questions.

4.1. Participants

The participants of this study were composed of two groups: English language teachers and learners of various grades. The number of learners were 110 of ESL classroom at four different institutes of different standards from school level to university level : one among is a vernacular Assamese medium school of lower primary (Jarani L.P School, Borghat, Sonitpur) set in rural area of Assam; another is a intermediate school named KendriyaVidyalaya, Khanapara) set in Guwahati city; again another is a College (B.Boroah College, Guwahati) set in Guwahati city; and the last one is a central university (Tezpur University, Napam) set in semi-urban area called Napaam. The participants' ages ranged from 10 to 22. Of all the participants, 69 were female and the remaining41 were male. They are all from various parts of India having various cultural backgrounds where English is spoken as a Second language. The one group has a level of proficiency in English while the other groups are beginners. Following is a description of both the groups.

Table 1. Distribution of Participants

Respondents	Total No of Students	School	College	University
Female	69	28	12	29
Male	41	26	8	7
Total No of Students	110	54	20	36

4.1.1. Teachers

The group of teachers of this study consisted of experienced primary, intermediate, secondary and university level teachers who teach English to grade V, IX, XII and post graduate students respectively in various institutions in primary, intermediate, secondary and higher standards schools in different parts of Assam in India. This group included 7 teachers composed of 3 females and 4 males. All teachers were from different parts of India, with teaching experience ranging from 7 to 20 years.

4.1.2. Students

The students who participated in the study were from four different grades, such as, grade V, IX, XII and Postgraduate. All the students were from various backgrounds both linguistically and culturally. They were from Indian nation. The experience of students in learning English as a second language varied between 4 and 17 years. This group included a total of 110 students, 69 females and 41 males.

4.2. Procedures

Copies of questionnaire were distributed among all participants in the study to both the groups: teachers and learners. The partakers of the study were instructed beforehand to express their attitudes, impressions and understandings which best reflects their level of agreement with the idea the questionnaire demanded. All the questionnaires were then collected to be analyzed by the research team. Apart from the questionnaire, the teachers and learners were also interviewed to express their attitudes frankly in more details when it comes to culture teaching in ESL classroom.

The intention behind carrying out interviews were to recognize learners' and teachers' perceptions towards learning and teaching about culture and what they think that appropriate

to teach and learn culture in ESL classrooms or not. It was used to find out whether teachers teach targeted culture or not in the ESL classroom and the types of culture being taught and learnt.

In this paper, the facts gathered from the survey of both learners' and teachers' questionnaires along with interviews were used as contrasting instruments in order to ensure the relationship and dissimilarity of attitudes between the ways teachers and learners identify the teaching of culture in ESL classrooms.

5. Findings

Both the data's acquired from the learners' and the teachers' interviews were compared is as to check the similarities and differences according to how the students and the teachers perceive the teaching of culture in a language classroom. Their opinions regarding certain questions helped in solving many questions that cropped up during the classroom surveys.

5.1. Learners' and Teacher's Responses

Firstly the survey was conducted upon the students by the means of questionnaire; there were 110 students in total of which 69 females, 41 males; of the 110 students, 54 are from the schools: 28 girls 26 boys; 20 students from the college: 12 girls and 8 boys; and 36 from the university: 29 females and 7 males. The students are from different communities having diverse cultural backgrounds hailing from different parts of India. In response to the first question asking them about their cultural background, many of them related themselves with the native culture of Assam which is *Axomia* (Assamese), even though most of them belonged to different communities from various parts of the state. One of the students answered to the question by saying that "even though we belong from different communities of different cultural background we have become aware about the native cultural practices and have become a part of it; there has been an inter mixing of culture which has definitely built a sense of multi-cultural tolerance among the people."

When asked about the importance of the culture of the targeted language (English), cent percent of the students were of the opinion that learning or having some knowledge about the targeted language culture is absolutely necessary. They had the view that getting to know about the culture helps them to associate and relate to that community and builds interest among the learners to learn about that society which speaks the language they are being taught.

In addition students were also asked what aspects of culture they would be more interested to learn about. The students had mixed opinions about it: 56.36% students (62 students represented as category 1in the table) wanted to learn more about history, geography customs and festivals, food and their lifestyle, family life, youth life. Similarly 32.72% of students (36 students, represented as category 2 in the bar diagram) were keen to know more about literature art and music, education, law and order of the targeted language culture; while 10.90% of the students (another group comprising of 12 students, represented as category 3 in the diagram) regarded rules of behaviors and model of politeness to be more interesting along with its national symbols and stereotypes. Most of them were least interested to know about the government and political institutions of the society in question.

Table 2. Showing students' interest in the various aspects of culture

Aspects of culture	Total number of respondents	Total percentage
Category 1	62	56.36
Category 2	36	32.72
Category 3	12	10.90
Total	110	100

The survey further revealed that most of the students were not only dependent on books in order to learn about the different English speaking countries primarily of U.K and U.S.A., 27.27% (30 of the total number of students) considered media and television as important source of information while another 56.36% (62 students) along with media and television used internet to acquire more knowledge about the culture, society in question, whereas only 16.36% (18 students) relied on textbooks and English classes as the principle source of acquiring cultural knowledge. The students were highly interested to know more about these countries.

Table 3. Showing the means of acquiring culture

Sources of acquiring culture	Total No. of respondents	Total Percentage
From the media, television	30	27.27
From books	18	16.36
Media & television along with internet	62	56.36
Total	110	100

The very first question directed towards the teachers was to find out "whether they think teaching culture is important in a language classroom?" The teachers were highly in support of the idea that culture should be given importance in a language classroom. In fact the university and the college teachers stated that they often discuss the differences and the similarities between their native and the targeted culture to help students understand better, while the school level teachers do not lay much emphasis. The teachers also revealed that teaching culture increases the interest and the eagerness among the students to know more, which further motivates the teachers and makes the classes more interesting. The teachers also said that giving the students a brief knowledge about the background culture of the targeted language would motivate the students to learn more. One of the teachers expressed that "Learning a language cannot be divorced from its culture. By integrating elements of the targeted culture into the English language classroom we can furnish the students with better knowledge in learning and understanding the language."

The next question "Which of the activities do you consider most useful for teaching culture?" sought to find out what they actually thought to be more influential for teaching culture; out of the seven teachers four of them were of the opinion that doing projects, watching videos, reading and discussing newspaper/ magazine articles and discussions on cultural differences and similarities were pivotal in a language classroom for teaching culture; three of the teachers considered lecture, role plays, drama and reading authentic texts (novels/short stories/ poems) would be more important. One of the teachers supplemented their response by saying that they actually had to study the students and know about them and

use the appropriate activities depending upon the classroom, suiting the needs and interest of the students.

On asking them about the aspects of culture which they teach or would be interested to teach about in the classroom, most of them believed that teaching the learners about geography, history, traditions, customs and festivals, law and order and about their lifestyles as well as their food habits would draw the learners one step closer towards the learning and understanding of the targeted culture. One of the teachers even put forward the view that making an individual listen to the music of the targeted culture would further motivate a learner regarding the same.

When the teachers were asked, "What aspects of culture would you be more interested to teach about?" ; all of them started with the aspects of history and geography followed by customs and festivals, literature and art, law and order. All of the teachers were of the same opinion, the results from both the groups of participants the teachers and the learners were similar. All the teachers agreed that these aspects of culture made the classes more interesting and kept the students engaged in the classroom.

The school, college and the university curriculum did not focus particularly on a single English speaking country; the school level as well as the college level textbooks included literary pieces from countries of the Inner circle as well as the Outer circle. The university curriculum focused on a much broader range of literary pieces from different native/ non-native English speaking countries in comparison to the school and college. However, the school level texts mainly concentrated on the American, Britain and Indian literary pieces. The teachers therefore did not focus on a single English speaking country while teaching. Still, most of them were of the opinion that the traditional teachers would prefer the UK English in terms of writing and pronunciation inside the classroom.

The survey also unfolded the teachers preferred medium of teaching culture, all of the seven teachers dependent upon the textbooks while three of them also used newspapers particularly in the school level; but the college and university teachers not only used literature, textbooks but also used the internet, cultural studies, folklore, videotapes and maps (for geographical knowledge) while teaching culture. Teachers advocates the use of these mediums as they believe that the textbooks are not enough for discussing culture related issues, and these sources of information helps them to provide more knowledge and information as well as motivate the learners to know more about the targeted language culture.

On asking them about examples of integrating culture in their classes they responded by discussing about the various activities and mediums they use inside the classroom such as role-play, screening of movies, discussion on native Indian culture and the targeted language cultures' similarities and differences. Teachers also talked about Indian adaptations of English classics and movies, and about the factors responsible for the differences in the adapted version of the English novels/dramas and the movies in an Indian context (Indian film industry). One of the university teachers said from his own experience that movie screening caught the attentions of majority of the students if not everyone in an ESL classroom, teachers would often see this as an opportunity to showcase the different cultural aspects in the movies and later compare it with an Indian setting or Indian adaptation of the same movie or story. When the students are asked to discuss the differences between the cultures, the students would put forward their views when the teacher talked about the various Indianized characters and the cultural factors that shaped them in a way which is if not totally, than in some respect different from the actual character such as *Hamlet* to *Haider*, *Romeo* to *Majnu* and *Juliet* to *Laila, Othello* to *Omkara.* This not only helped the students to know more about the targeted language culture but also helped them in grasping/ realizing

and attains a deeper understanding of the cultural variations and the similarities between the two.

6. Discussion

The survey successfully established the fact that English has become a very important language in today's world and that it is one of the fastest growing languages. Both the students and the teachers realize the importance of teaching and learning culture in and outside a language classroom. In their responses to the interview questions most of the teachers believed that culture can be taught by the means of various activities such as project works and discussions as well as reading newspapers and magazines, authentic texts etc. The teacher also believed that not all the mediums are applicable in all the classrooms, certain activities and approaches are applicable in a certain classroom depending upon the learners.

The results of the teachers and the students' survey also revealed that the use of other sources of information such as internet, media and television etc. facilitates the teaching and learning of a new language culture, most of the teachers use audio, video clips and also articles which can be easily obtained from these sources and these really proved to be beneficial in the class. Most of the learners responded to the question saying that textbooks and classroom lectures does not provide enough information and they would always look up on the internet and read magazines and newspapers to be updated with the current affairs and the recent developments in order to learn and understand more about the targeted culture. The most interesting aspects of teaching and learning culture as brought out by the survey were the historical, geographical, cultural, literary aspects grabbing the interest of both the students and the teachers alike. The research further revealed that the co-ordination and understanding between the students and the teachers smoothened the proceeding in a classroom thus enabling the teachers and the students to teach and learn in a comfortable environment.

7. Concluding Remarks

The present study established that teaching/learning of target culture in the ESL classroom should be considered as an essential part of teaching English as a Second/foreign language. The lack of knowledge about the target culture while teaching/learning English might lead to disparity in learners' knowledge of the targeted culture and customs. As a result, the learners might end up acquiring a high level of language proficiency but again they might not have the same level of cultural or contextual knowledge in the targeted language which might possibly cause cultural shock or distress in the process of communication.

In order to fill the gap between the ESL learners' perceived knowledge about the targeted culture to avail a standard level of proficiency in the targeted culture the language instructors should work strongly with learners to connect the gap between the targeted culture and the English language. By teaching the targeted culture in ESL classroom, and also by raising perception regarding the among One way to accomplish this is to teach the target culture and raise learners' awareness of the significance and values among the ESL learners on their attainment of the target language. But in doing so, the native culture of the learners should not be ignored; rather it should be respected at the same time by making a constant link amongst the two. Also the learners might be invited to share their own backgrounds, traditions, customs etc. even inside the ESL classroom. This will result to the escalation of learners' confidence, self-esteem. In so doing, the second language learner would be more comfortable while learning and students may be invited to share their cultural traditions. When learners start to share their backgrounds with others, their self-esteem would be heightened (Brown 2000). In doing so, the learner in this situation would be in a better position to acknowledging the targeted culture, and thus end up acquiring the targeted language.

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APPENDIX 1
Questionnaires on ESL Classroom and Culture (for Students)

Please answer the following question about learning culture.

Name: Gender:

Age: Grade: State:

1) What is your Mother Tongue?

2) What is your L1 (First Language)?

3) What is your L2 (Second Language)?

4) What is your Cultural Background?

5) Do you think learning culture is important while learning English?

A)	Yes, very important	C)	Yes, important
B)	Not important	D)	Don know

6) Should culture of targeted language be taught in English classes or on a separate course according to you?

7) Which of the following would be most useful for understanding and learning about the other culture?

(1-most useful, 2- useful, 3- uncertain, 4- least useful, 5- not useful)
Please tick the appropriate box accordingly

	1	2	3	4	5
speech on certain topics/lectures					
discourse on cultural resemblance and contrasts					
Movies					
listening to English songs and interpreting the lyrics					
radio programs					
reading and expressing personal opinions newspaper articles/magazines					
discussing current events					
reading authentic texts (novels, dramas, short stories, poems)					
acting or role plays					
doing assignments/projects					
cultural insights					
Other, please specify………………..					

8) What aspects of culture would you be more interested to learn about? Please rate from l to 5 for each selection. (1-most useful, 2- useful, 3- uncertain, 4- least useful, 5- not useful) Please tick the appropriate box

	1	2	3	4	5
Literature and art					
music					
History					
Geography					
Monarchy					
traditions, customs and festivals					
government and political institutions					
law and order					
education					
family life					
food					
youth life					
national symbols and stereotypes					
rules of behavior					
model of politeness					
non-verbal communication					
Others please specify..................					

9. When you learn the areas named in 6 which country do you mostly focus on? Please indicate approximately in what proportions

A) United Kingdom……………………. %

B) United States ………………..%

C) Australia ....%

D) other English speaking countries ………………%

10. I have acquired most knowledge about Britain and other English speaking countries

- from my English classes
- from the media, television
- from books

- from internet
- from elsewhere, please specify….

11. I would like to know more about Britain and other English speaking countries
 Yes   No

APPENDIX 2
Questionnaires on ESL Classroom and Culture (for teachers)

Dear English Teacher

We, Kamruzzaman Choudhury & Tapash Kakati are doing research in teaching culture in ESL (English as a Second Language) classroom for our paper entitled "ESL Classroom and Culture: An Indian Context". The aim of the research is to find out what English teachers think of teaching culture in the ESL classroom as well as the scenario of teaching culture in Indian ESL classroom, what and how culture is taught. We are mostly interested in your experience inside the classroom. The information you provide will be a very useful contribution to our research. Thank you for your cooperation.

QUESTIONNAIRES
Please answer the following questions:

1. Do you think that teaching culture in the ESL (English as a Second language) classroom is important? Give reasons.
 ………………………………………………………….

2. Do you think it is important for ESL/EFL teachers to include the target language's culture as part of their classroom teaching?
 A) Yes, very important   B) Not important
 C) Yes, important   D) It should be taught on a separate course

3. Do you discuss culture related issues in the English Classroom; if the answer was *yes* then how often do you discuss culture related issues in your English classes?

 A)   Often (in almost every lesson)   B)   Rarely (once a month)
 C)   Sometimes (once a week)   D)   Never

4. Do you think the students are more interested and motivated in learning the language with some background knowledge in culture?

 A)   Yes,   B)   No
 C)   Yes, but not much   D)   Don't know

5. Which of the following do you consider most useful for teaching culture? Please rate from 1 to 5 for each selection. (1-most useful, 2- useful, 3- uncertain, 4- least useful, 5- not useful)
 Please tick the appropriate box

	1	2	3	4	5
speech on certain topics/lectures					
discourse on cultural resemblance and contrasts					
Movies					
Listening to English songs and interpreting the lyrics					
radio programs					
Reading and expressing personal opinions about newspaper/ magazine articles					
discussing current affairs					
Reading authentic texts (novels/dramas/short stories/ poems)					
Acting/role plays					
Doing assignments/projects					
Culture insight					
Other (please specify)					

6. What aspects of culture would you be more interested to learn about? Please rate from l to 5 for each selection. (1-most interesting, 2 interesting, 3 uncertain, 4 least interesting, 5- not interesting)

	1	2	3	4	5
Literature and art					
Traditions, Customs and festivals					
Music					
Monarchy					
History					
Geography					
Government and political institution					
Law and order					
Education and schools					
Family life					
Youth life					
Food					
National symbols and stereotypes					
Non-verbal communication					
Model of Politeness					
Rules of Behaviors					
Others (please specify)					

7. When you teach the areas named in 6 which country do you mostly focus on? Please indicate approximately in what proportions

    A) United Kingdom……………………. %

    B) United States ………………..%

    C) Australia ....%

    D) other English speaking countries ………………%

8. What sources do you use while teaching culture? Please tick the ones you use:

- literature
- school textbooks
- newspapers
- the Internet
- movies
- cultural studies (e.g. British studies) textbooks
- folklore
- videotapes
- recordings
- realia (maps, brochures, tickets etc.)
- other, please specify…..

9. In your opinion do the textbooks allow you to discuss culture-related issues?
    A) Yes, quite a lot   B) Enough   C) To some extent   D) No

10. Name the main textbooks you are presently using for teaching English in forms
    (Grade V/IX/XII)
    ……………………………

11. Can you give a few examples of integrating culture in your classes?