

Teaching English through the Study of British and American Culture

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Annotation: *This article explores the importance of incorporating British and American cultural elements into the teaching of English as a foreign language (EFL). It highlights the inseparable link between language and culture, and how familiarity with cultural contexts enhances learners' communicative competence, motivation, and global understanding. Practical strategies for classroom integration are discussed to support educators in creating more engaging and effective lessons. By studying cultural elements such as holidays (e.g., Thanksgiving, Bonfire Night), literature (e.g., Shakespeare, Mark Twain), media (e.g., BBC vs. Hollywood), and societal norms (e.g., politeness in British English vs. informality in American English), students can better understand idioms, slang, humor, and non-verbal communication. Additionally, this method makes learning more engaging and relevant by connecting language to real-life contexts. Educators can use films, music, historical events, news articles, and intercultural comparisons as tools to bridge language learning and cultural exploration. This not only aids in language acquisition but also prepares students for real-world interactions in English-speaking environments, whether in academia, travel, or work.*

Keywords: *English language teaching, cultural competence, British culture, American culture, language and culture, intercultural communication, EFL, ESL.*

Преподавание английского языка посредством изучения британской и американской культуры

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Аннотация: *В этой статье рассматривается важность включения британских и американских культурных элементов в преподавание английского языка как иностранного (EFL). В ней подчеркивается неразрывная связь между языком и культурой, а также то, как знакомство с культурными контекстами повышает коммуникативную компетентность, мотивацию и глобальное понимание учащихся. Обсуждаются практические стратегии интеграции в классе, которые помогут педагогам создавать более увлекательные и эффективные уроки. Изучая культурные элементы, такие как праздники (например, День благодарения, Ночь костров), литературу (например, Шекспир, Марк Твен), средства массовой информации (например, BBC против Голливуда) и общественные нормы (например, вежливость в британском английском против неформальности в американском английском), студенты могут лучше понимать идиомы, сленг, юмор и невербальное общение. Кроме того, этот метод делает обучение более интересным и актуальным, связывая язык с реальными жизненными контекстами. Преподаватели могут использовать фильмы, музыку, исторические события, новостные статьи и межкультурные сравнения в качестве инструментов для соединения изучения языка и культурного исследования. Это не только помогает в усвоении языка, но и готовит студентов к реальному взаимодействию в англоязычной среде, будь то в академической среде, путешествиях или на работе.*

Ключевые слова: Преподавание английского языка, культурная компетентность, британская культура, американская культура, язык и культура, межкультурная коммуникация, EFL, ESL.

Britaniya va Amerika madaniyatini o‘rganish orqali ingliz tilini o‘rgatish

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Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqola ingliz tilini chet tili (EFL) sifatida o‘rgatishda Britaniya va Amerika madaniy elementlarini kiritish muhimligini o‘rganadi. U til va madaniyat o‘rtasidagi ajralmas bog‘liqlikni ta’kidlaydi va madaniy kontekstlar bilan tanishish o‘quvchilarning kommunikativ kompetentsiyasini, motivatsiyasini va global tushunchasini qanday oshirishini ta’kidlaydi. O‘qituvchilarni yanada qiziqarli va samarali darslar yaratishda qo‘llab-quvvatlash uchun sinfni integratsiyalashning amaliy strategiyalari muhokama qilinadi. Kalit so‘zlar: Innovatsion texnologiyalar, ingliz tilini o‘qitish, raqamli savodxonlik, aralash ta’lim, jalb etish, global hamkorlik, baholash, o‘quvchi mustaqilligi. Bayramlar (masalan, Shukrona kuni, gulxan kechasi), adabiyot (masalan, Shekspir, Mark Tven), ommaviy axborot vositalari (masalan, BBC va Gollivud) va ijtimoiy me’yorlar (masalan, Britaniya ingliz tilidagi xushmuomalalik va amerikacha ingliz tilidagi norasmiylik) kabi madaniy elementlarni o‘rganish orqali o‘quvchilar idiomlar, hazil, slang va norasmiy so‘zlarni yaxshiroq tushunishlari mumkin. Bundan tashqari, bu usul tilni real hayot kontekstlari bilan bog‘lash orqali o‘rganishni yanada qiziqarli va dolzarb qiladi. O‘qituvchilar til o‘rganish va madaniyatni o‘rganishda ko‘prik vositasi sifatida filmlar, musiqa, tarixiy voqealar, yangiliklar maqolalari va madaniyatlararo taqqoslashlardan foydalanishlari mumkin. Bu nafaqat tilni o‘zlashtirishga yordam beradi, balki talabalarni ingliz tilida so‘zlashadigan muhitda, xoh akademiyada, xoh sayohatda yoki ishda bo‘lsin, haqiqiy dunyo o‘zaro munosabatlariga tayyorlaydi.

Kalit so‘zlar: Ingliz tilini o‘qitish, madaniy kompetentsiya, Britaniya madaniyati, Amerika madaniyati, til va madaniyat, madaniyatlararo muloqot, EFL, ESL.

Introduction

In the process of learning a foreign language, understanding the culture of the people who speak that language is as crucial as mastering grammar and vocabulary. English, being a global language, is deeply rooted in the cultures of the countries where it is spoken, especially the United Kingdom and the United States. These two nations represent distinct yet influential cultural models that significantly shape the usage and development of the English language. Teaching English through cultural content not only makes the language more meaningful but also prepares learners for real-life communication in international environments. Language and culture are fundamentally interconnected. Culture shapes the way language is used, and language is a reflection of cultural values, social norms, and history. Learners who are culturally aware are better equipped to interpret meaning, understand context, and use language appropriately. For example, idiomatic expressions, humor, gestures, and politeness strategies vary widely between British and American English – and both differ significantly from other world cultures. Recognizing these differences helps students become more competent communicators. British culture can provide learners with exposure to formal, traditional, and diverse aspects of English: Historical and Literary Richness: Use of classic literature (e.g., Shakespeare, Jane Austen) introduces students to old and modern forms of English and cultural narratives. Customs and Etiquette: Concepts such as “tea time,” queuing, or British humor reflect social norms and politeness strategies unique to the UK. Regional Dialects: Exploring

different accents like Scottish, Cockney, or Welsh helps develop listening skills and shows linguistic diversity as mentioned Byram, M. (1997).

The development of education is getting faster and faster, exchanges between countries are becoming more and more frequent, and personnel interactions are getting closer. Britain and the United States, as established Western capitalist powers, have developed rapidly in economy, technology, and education. Many countries are learning English. In English teaching, British and American cultures inevitably penetrate back into them. This article mainly studies the infiltration of British and American cultures in English teaching. This paper mainly uses the big data analysis method of intelligent Internet of things, and uses survey, interview and statistical technology to analyze and study the culture and language between different nationalities in the United States and Britain. It tries to investigate and analyze the role of language and culture in infiltration; conduct practical investigations on the meaning of English teaching, the significance of cultural infiltration, and the specific manifestations of cultural differences, and collect experimental data. Experimental data show that the study of the penetration of British and American cultures in English teaching not only requires a certain cultural foundation as a background, but also shows the differences in knowledge understanding in teaching due to different cultural backgrounds. Experimental data show that after a thorough understanding of British and American cultures, teaching efficiency in English teaching has increased by 20%, and student satisfaction with English classes has increased by about 35%. Only with a realistic understanding of the differences and unity of British and American cultures can we truly make English teaching smoother.

Reasons for Chinese Students to Make Mistakes in Learning British and American Culture It is well known that Chinese students' English ability has always been characterized by high accuracy. Many students can answer grammar questions correctly, but their ability in learning culture is quite insufficiently. (1) Chinese way of thinking is transplanted into English expression or Chinese culture is equivalent to western culture, thereby ignoring the cultural differences. When a member of a culture 1576 observes another culture, he often understands and explains the observed phenomenon with own native culture model, and believes that opponent cultural behaviors and own native cultural behavior express the same purpose and meaning. Students can understand, think and express easily according to own native culture mode when expression modes and significance of two cultures are different, thereby producing misunderstanding frequently by Kramersch, C. (1993). □ (2) Real language environment is insufficient. English does not act as a tool for people in daily communication in China. Students use English only in class, who are lack of real language environment. English classroom teaching becomes 'one-man show' of teacher in China due to influence of traditional teaching method-translation. Teachers repeat what the book says, and students just take notes blindly and accept the language information passively. English should be full of vitality, rich and colorful as an international language, but students feel boring in learning. Culture introduction is ignored in preparation and use of traditional teaching teaching materials in China. Traditional English teaching materials are prepared aiming at training students' ability in examination without consideration of cultivating students' ability in actual application. In the end, students learn isolated grammar knowledge, which is deviated from practical application. They do not understand the cultural background and have no courage to communicate with foreigners in English. IV. Several Strategies of Introducing British and American Culture in English Teaching (1) Exploring Teaching Materials and Enhancing Students' Cultural Awareness English teachers should develop and utilize current English teaching materials fully. Classroom pragmatic consciousness should be improved in classroom teaching. They should attach great importance to teaching communication culture and strengthening students' sensitivity to culture. Teachers should explain cultural background knowledge about target language in the teaching materials. Therefore, students can achieve a general understanding on related culture background before learning the text. Teachers can obtain excellent effect by teaching through combining cultural connotation. For example, one food festival can be held when hamburger is taught. Students and teachers can produce some western food jointly, such

as apple pie, etc. Some traditional Chinese food also can be produced such as dumplings, etc. Therefore, students can compare Chinese and western diets in order to choose a healthy diet. Students also can be taught for using western tableware so as to avoid mistake in real life. When students learn unit about festivals, teachers can explain the origins of Christmas, Halloween and other holidays as well as some festival celebration activities. The contents can be compared with traditional Chinese festivals so that students can feel festival atmosphere and improve their interest in learning English. Most information in internet is in English. Its language can actually reflect language in real life. The teacher can assign preparation task, and ask students to search materials related to text content before formal lesson is started. Therefore, students can understand related background knowledge about text content and deepen the understanding of the text on one hand, they also can expand their knowledge on the other hand. Teachers can make use of infinite resources of network in designing multimedia course-ware. Multimedia teaching means can play an unexpected effect in introduction of geography. Maps of Britain, America and other countries can be displayed visually. In addition, teachers also can make full use of pictures, slides, and other visual teaching tools. (2) Comparing Cross-cultural Differences Both parties of foreign language communicate. Language and culture are deeply intertwined. One of the most effective ways to teach English is by incorporating cultural elements from countries where English is the native language, particularly the United Kingdom and the United States. Teaching English through the lens of British and American culture not only enhances language acquisition but also broadens students' understanding of how language functions in different social and cultural settings. Understanding cultural context is essential for mastering a language. Culture shapes the way people speak, write, and interact. For example, British English often emphasizes politeness and understatement, while American English tends to be more direct and casual. Teaching these cultural distinctions helps learners better grasp the tone, meaning, and appropriateness of language use by Cortazzi, M., & Jin, L. (1999).

Moreover, idioms, slang, humor, and references to historical or cultural events are common in native English usage. Without cultural knowledge, these expressions can be confusing. By studying cultural content – such as holidays, traditions, media, and lifestyles – students can understand and use these expressions more naturally. Teaching English through culture makes learning more engaging and meaningful. It encourages students to think beyond grammar rules and vocabulary lists, developing skills in interpretation, empathy, and intercultural communication. It also prepares them to interact more effectively in global environments – whether in study, work, or travel mentioned by Tomalin, B., & Stempleski, S. (1993).

American Culture in the English Classroom

American culture is widely accessible and relatable to many learners, especially through media and pop culture:

- **Media and Pop Culture:** Films, songs, and series such as *Friends* or *The Simpsons* teach conversational English and slang.
- **Holidays and National Identity:** Teaching about events like Thanksgiving, Independence Day, or Martin Luther King Jr. Day enhances cultural awareness and vocabulary.
- **Communication Style:** Americans often use informal, direct, and friendly expressions. Understanding phrases like “What’s up?” or “You nailed it!” provides insight into real-life usage.

Conclusion

Teaching English through the study of British and American cultures enriches the learning experience by making it more engaging, practical, and meaningful. It develops students' linguistic skills alongside cultural intelligence, which is essential in a globalized world. Educators who integrate culture into their teaching foster not just better English speakers, but also more empathetic and culturally aware individuals. Exposure to cultural elements such as traditions, values, media, and daily life not only enriches language skills but also helps learners develop critical thinking, empathy, and cultural sensitivity. Understanding why people in the UK or the US communicate in certain ways, use specific expressions, or follow particular customs gives students the tools to interact more

naturally and respectfully with native speakers. Furthermore, this culturally-informed approach prepares students for real-world applications of the English language, whether they aim to study abroad, pursue international careers, or simply communicate more effectively in a globalized society. As a result, the fusion of language and culture in the classroom promotes deeper engagement, lasting learning, and a broader worldview.

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