Department of English Language and Literature.

Level: Master 2/ Language and Culture

Subject: Teaching Culture

" **We need to be courageous enough to create space for change and the new language that will facilitate that change.**

- Jeff Grabill

Language and Culture

Introduction

In this era of information and technology explosion, peoples in the world come into contact with one another more often and more easily than ever before. The need for mastering a foreign or second language besides one"s own seems to dramatically grow. More people are learning languages for their personal and professional needs. Although the field of language teaching has done an excellent job to increasingly better accommodate the needs of language learners, the field may have to do even more and better to address the various needs of language learners. Specifically, cultural aspects of the language being learned must be taught concurrently with the linguistic aspects, which have traditionally been emphasized.

Teaching culture to foreign or second language students may not be a novel topic, as it has repeatedly been discussed by a whole host of authors such as Atkinson (1999), Blatchford (1986), Brown (1986), Brown (2007a), Brown and Eisterhold (2004), Brooks (1986), Damen (1987), Morgan and Cain (2000), Tang (1999), Tang (2006), Valdes (1986), to name but a few. However, after decades of development in language teaching, one might wonder if culture has increasingly become an important component in the language curriculum as well as in the training programs for language teachers. Likewise, it may not be clear if researchers and authors in language teaching are still interested in finding out effective methods to integrate culture in second and foreign language classrooms.

Before any discussion on the relationship between language and culture can be carried out, it is first necessary to discuss some common terms such as language, culture, enculturation, acculturation, culture awareness, cross-cultural awareness, cultural identity, culture bump, and culture shock. An understanding of these basic terms will enable one to realize the importance of culture in language learning and teaching.

What is language?

Language has been around since human beings started to communicate with one another for their daily life needs. The term language is so familiar that few people would ever try to define it. It is superficially not hard to define it, but in fact to have a comprehensive definition of language is an extremely daunting task. Definitions for language run the gamut from very simple to extremely complex. Patrikis (1988) simply defined language as signs that convey meanings. Language is also "a system of signs that is seen as having itself a cultural value" (Kramsch, 1998, p. 3). From a linguistic perspective, Sapir (1968), a renowned linguist, defined language as an entirely human and non-intrinsic method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols. Generally speaking, language can be regarded as a system of verbal and nonverbal signs used to express meanings. Besides language, another closely related concept that is sometimes mentioned in the literature of language teaching is culture.

What is culture?

One of the well-known definitions of culture is Goodenough"s (1957). …a society"s culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members, and to do so in any role that they accept for any one of themselves (p. 167). Brown (2007), however, defined culture as a way of life, as the context within which people exist, think, feel, and relate to others, as the "glue" (p. 188) that binds groups of people together. Moreover, culture, as Brown (2007) suggested, can also be defined as the ideas, customs, skills, arts, and tools that characterize a certain group of people in a given period of time. Sowden (2007) indicated that "culture tended to mean that body of social, artistic, and intellectual traditions associated historically with a particular social, ethnic or national group" (pp. 304-305). Additionally, Mead (1961) postulated that culture can be learned, whereas Fox (1999) noted that "culture is relative and changeable in space and time" (p. 90). Like language, culture may seem to be another concept that is not easy to define. In fact, Tang (2006) rightly observed that despite the continued efforts in various disciplinary fields to find a definition for the term culture, at the present time there is no single definition that satisfies everyone.

Figure 1 depicts the relationship of the three components of culture (3Ps) according to the Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century (1999). This triangle model of the cultural framework represents how products, practices, and perspectives are interrelated, and allows teachers to see the

relationships among the three elements of culture to consider when planning instructional lessons.
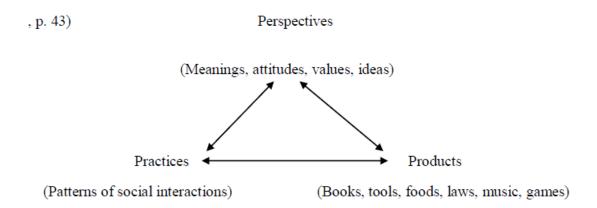
, p. 43)   Perspectives

(Meanings, attitudes, values, ideas)

Practices   Products

(Patterns of social interactions)   (Books, tools, foods, laws, music, games)

Figure 1. The Culture Triangle (National Standards in Foreign Language Education

Project, 1999, p. 47)

What are the characteristics and components of culture?

Although the task of defining culture may be difficult, it appears that characteristics and components of culture can be identified. Damen (1987) presented six notable characteristics of culture.

1. Culture is learned.

2. Cultures and cultural patterns change.

3. Culture is a universal fact of human life.

4. Cultures provide sets of unique and interrelated, selected blueprints for living and accompanying sets of values and beliefs to support these blueprints.

5. Language and culture are closely related and interactive.

6. Culture functions as a filtering device between its bearers and the great range of stimuli presented by the environment.

Additionally, Damen (1987) suggested that culture can be examined from the point of view of its individual components (such as dress, systems of rewards and punishments, uses of time and space, fashions of eating, means of communication, family relationships, beliefs and values), or from the more social point of view of its systems (such as kinship, education, economy, government association, and health). However, Nieto (2002, p. 10) postulated that "culture is complex and intricate; it cannot be reduced to holidays, foods, or dances, although these are of course elements of cultures."

The Interrelationship between Language and Culture

According to (Jing, 2010: 8) "language and culture are closely linked because language and culture are both integral parts of human life for communicating as supported by many scholars". The nature of the relationship between language and culture is that; language determines thought and culture; language influences thought and culture; culture influences people's language; and finally language and culture influence each other. He again advocates that language and culture are highly interrelated and suggest that language cannot be studied without incorporating its culture and culture cannot be studied in isolation from the language in which they are spoken. In this line, Jing (2010: 1) adds that they are inseparable.

According to Han (2010) "culture is something like making bread with butter in. It is named as butter bread. If butter is spread on the top of the bread, it is not butter bread" and "culture and language are twins, look very much like each other. People cannot easily distinguish who is who". Brown (2000: 177) says more about the relationship between language and culture "a language is a part of a culture, and a culture is a part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture". In other words, since language is regarded as a means of communication, this implies that it is the responsible one for cultural content's transmission. In the light of this relationship, it appears that there is a close relationship between language and culture. Language is a key component of culture. It is shaped by culture and it is further the primary medium for spreading the culture. Finally, it seems that language is more than culture and vice versa.

According to Lappalainen (2011: 17), "language has a central role as a maintainer and reformer of a culture because it shapes the community's views of the world through texts." Byram and Esarte-Sarries (1991: 5) state that language is the main medium for expressing other phenomena, including culture. Through the language, the different elements of culture are expressed such as values, beliefs and meanings and it also refers to the objects of a given culture. Lappalainen, (2011: 17) adds more on this role and points out that the relationship is at the same time psychological, sociological and political in the sense that a language offers people a way to express their cultural backgrounds to other people. As far as the role of

language in culture is concerned, he says that the attitude towards language and culture has, however, slightly changed throughout the history. In the past, one of the main tasks of a language was to protect one's own culture from strangers and dangers. Nowadays this role is reversed as the aim is to bring cultures together and try to understand each other. So, there is plenty of space to say in case the question of how language affects culture is considered.

They again state that the relationship between language and culture is a diverse and complex one. He believes that culture is an embodiment of the language and without cultures languages would not exist. The development of languages to their present form has been possibly only in close contact with the development of cultures. Nieto (2010: 146) comments more on this role and states that language is implicated with culture and it is an important part of it. In this respect, Kramsch (1993) states that culture as information caused by the language and the center of culture is an essential part of language proficiency. So, there is plenty of space to say in case also the question of how culture affects language is considered.

Themes of culture can be ranked according to their levels and importance. For example, it can be looked; on the one hand, at grand themes such as great authors, important historical movements, and classical music, on the other hand, it can be also looked at more minor themes such as current popular trends or news items. These

classifications of cultural themes into major or minor themes are frequently called Big "C" or little "c" culture (Jing, 2010: 18).

Big "C" Culture

Great emphasis is put on distinguishing between cultural themes based on particular criteria. For Peterson (2004: 24), cultural themes can be ranked into two levels according to the importance scale. Big "C" culture is "the culture which represents a set of facts and statistics relating to the arts, history, geography, business, education, festivals and customs of the target speech community (Laohawiriyanon, 2012: 85). In this respect, any culture which focuses on the products and contributions to a society and its outstanding individuals, is often referred to as Large/Big/Capital/Macro "C" culture including politics, economy, history, literature, fine arts, sciences and geography (Jing, 2010: 5). (Lafayette, 1997) indicates those that fit the Big "C" category include recognizing geographical monuments, historical events, major institutions, and major artistic monuments. Brooks (1968) also defines "big-C" culture as the best in human life restricted to the elitists. Wintergerst and Mcveigh (2010) support Brooks' view and maintain that the domain of big "C" culture is for the highly educated people. This social class has the power to understand big "C" culture themes because their nature implies a kind of intellectual efforts. Finally, big "C" culture is important in any research related to the issue of culture and language.

Small "c" Culture

Small "c" culture is another aspect of cultural themes. It refers to the daily aspects of life that embody everything as a total way of life (Laohawiriyanon, 2011: 85). For Lee (2009: 78) this type of culture is "the invisible and deeper sense of a target culture" including attitudes or beliefs and assumptions. Peterson (2004: 24-25) defines little "c" culture as the culture focusing on common or minor themes. It includes themes of the two types; the first one is the invisible culture such as popular issues, opinions, viewpoints, preferences and tastes, certain knowledge (trivia, facts). The second type is the visible culture such as gestures, body posture, use of space, clothing style, food, hobbies, music, etc. According to Lafayette (1997), the Little "c" culture includes recognizing and explaining everyday active cultural patterns such as eating, shopping and greeting people; every passive pattern such as social stratification, marriage and work; and acting appropriately in common everyday situations (Jing, 2010: 5).

It is clear by now that small "c" culture is not restricted to any particular social class but it is intended for all categories and individuals within any society. Little "c" cultural knowledge is essential for intercultural communication situations because it affects the ways of thinking and using a language. The socio-cultural values, norms, beliefs and assumptions entailed in small "c" culture assists members of a particular culture or society to use "appropriate and polite" language within the target society. Therefore, if EFL learners know about small "c" culture in the target

culture, they will better comprehend how those in that culture communicate with each other (Laohiwiriyanon, 2011: 85).

The "big-C" Culture is already taught in the classroom; it is the "little-c" one that needs to be emphasized, especially in the FL classroom. Values, norms and beliefs are ignored in the Algerian IFL classroom. Teachers/ administrators don't want student to be exposed to the norms, values and beliefs of a given society. The main important reason is the *fear*. It is not only the fear of *influence* but they are afraid that the learners would *lose their culture*. However, since we live under globalization and due to **interculturalism**, children are influenced due to media. Therefore, what is best is to teach the "little c" culture to children. If one is influenced by other cultures while one does not have an identity. One would lose his own culture and adopt the other culture. However, if one has an identity, the cultural influence will be tolerant to other cultures.

The Most Common Approaches to the Teaching of Culture

In language teaching, an *approach* has come to mean "the theory, philosophy and principles underlying a particular set of teaching practices (Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics 2002). However, in the literature on teaching culture, the term is used in a more relaxed way: only a few of the so-called approaches seem to constitute a theory or a philosophy.

In the history of the teaching of culture different approaches can be noticed. Some of them have lost ground; some have had and still have dominant positions. The approaches can be classified in different ways. In very broad terms, they can be divided into two: those which focus only (or mostly) on the culture of the country whose language is studied (the mono-cultural approach) and those which are based on comparing learners' own and the other culture (the comparative approach).

The **mono-cultural approach** was typical for the courses like *Landeskunde*, *area studies*, and *British life and institutions* and is considered inadequate nowadays because it does not consider learners' understanding of their own culture.

The **comparative approach**, on the other hand, emphasises that foreign culture should be

related to learners' own. Buttjes and Byram (1991: 13, cited in Edginton 2000:136) claim that instead of providing learners with "a one-way flow of cultural information" they should be encouraged to reflect on their own and foreign culture. The comparative approach draws on the

learner's own knowledge, beliefs and values which form a basis for successful communication with members of the other culture. Byram states that learners cannot rid themselves of their own culture and simply step into another. For learners to deny their own culture is to deny their own being (Byram 1994: 43). While the essence of the comparative approach is to provide a double perspective it does not mean that learners need to evaluate which culture is better. Instead, students learn that there are many ways of doing things and their way is not the only possible one.

Therefore, the comparative approach does involve evaluation but not in terms of comparison with something which is better, but in terms of improving what is all too familiar. Comparison makes the strange, the other, familiar, and makes the familiar, the self, strange – and therefore easier to re-consider.(Byram and Planet: 2000: 189) The comparative approach may begin either with the strange or the familiar. Traditionally, the primary focus in foreign language classes has been given to the other culture. Nonetheless, some authors emphasise the need to deal with the familiar first and then move to the strange (ibid.).

Comparison gives learners a new perspective of their own language and culture and questions their "taken-for-granted nature" (Byram 1998: 6). Through comparison, learners discover both similarities and differences of their own and other cultures. This, in turn, can lead to increased knowledge, understanding and acceptance. Risager(1998:243-252) describes four approaches to the teaching of culture, two of which *the intercultural and multicultural* include a considerable element of comparison.

The intercultural approach: It is based on the idea that culture is best learned through comparison. Though the focus is on the target culture, *the intercultural approach* deals with the relations between the learners' own country and the country/countries where the language is spoken. It may include comparisons between the two and it develops learners'understanding of both. The aim is to develop learners' intercultural and communicative competences, which would enable them to function as mediators between the two cultures. The approach has become increasingly recognised since the 1980s. However, Risager (1998:246) considers this approach inadequate as it is "blind to the actual multicultural character of almost all existing countries or states" and suggests that teachers should use the multicultural approach.

The multicultural approach: *it* draws on the idea that several cultures exist within one culture. The multicultural approach includes a focus on the ethnic and linguistic diversity of the target country/countries as well as on the learners' own. As in the *intercultural approach*, comparison is important. Risager (1998: 246) also stresses that a balanced and anti-racist view of cultures should be involved. This approach emphasises the principle that cultures are not monolithic.

Transcultural approach: The third approach suggested by Risager is the **transcultural approach.** The basic idea behind this is that in the modern world cultures are interwoven due to extensive tourism, migration, world-wide communication systems, economic interdependence and globalisation. It is also

reflected by the fact that many people speak foreign languages as *lingua francas*. The transcultural approach, therefore, deals with the foreign language as an international language. Its main aim is to teach learners to use it for international communication. In this case, it could be argued that it is not necessary at all to link the foreign language to any specific culture. However, Byram (1997: 55) contends that although it is possible to introduce topics which are of universal significance in all cultures, such an approach leaves learners without topics which are

characteristic of a particular country that is the ones which "characterize its uniqueness for the

language learner". Also, such an approach denies the link between language and culture.

Foreign cultural approach: The mono-cultural approach in Risager's list is represented by what he calls the ***foreign cultural*** *approach.* It is based on the concept of a single culture and focuses on the culture of the country where the language is spoken. It does not deal with the learners' own country and the relations between the two. The teaching aim is to develop the so-called native speaker communicative and cultural competence. The approach was dominant until the 1980s and is criticised nowadays because of the lack of relationships between cultures. Galloway provides some other examples of the mono-cultural approach (1985, cited in Wiśniewska- Brogowskan.d., Liiv 1999: 61), the most wide-spread of which are the following four:

The Frankenstein Approach: A taco from here, a flamenco dancer from here, a Gacho from here, a bullfight from there.

The 4-F Approach : Folk dances, festivals, fairs and food.

Tour Guide Approach: Monuments, rivers, cities etc.

By-The-Way Approach: Sporadic lectures or bits of behaviour selected indiscriminately to emphasise sharp differences.

All these approaches provide learners mostly with factual information and only offer an "interesting sidelight" to the foreign culture (Chastain 1988: 305). Because of their very limited nature, they should not be encouraged.

In addition to the above-discussed approaches, there are a number of approaches that are centred around various aspects of a given culture or concentrate on developing certain skills in learners. The following approaches concentrate on both giving knowledge and understanding of the country's culture and encourage students to compare it with their own.

The theme-based or ***thematic approach*** to the teaching of culture is based around certain themes, for example, *symbolism, value, ceremony, love, honour, humour, beauty, intellectuality, the art of living, realism, common sense, family, liberty, patriotism, religion*, and *education*, which are seen as typical of a culture. Though mono-cultural by nature, it tries to show the relationships and values in a given culture and, therefore, helps learners to understand it better. Nostrand, who looked for the main themes for the French culture, worked out a model known as an

Emergent Model (1967 and 1978, cited in Seelye 1993: 132-133; Hughes 1986: 165-166). This is based on the assumption that certain ingredients are characteristic of the behaviour of members of a certain culture. Nostrand (1974,cited in Seelye 1993: 133) argues that relationships in a given society can be best taught when grouped under main themes. He defines a theme as "an emotionally charged concern, which motivates or strongly influences the culture bearer's conduct in a wide variety of situations." One, theme, for example, that he considers as a manifestation of the French culture is *intellectuality.* However, it is sometimes thought that the theme-based approach provides learners with a segmented view of the target culture. It might be difficult for them to see individual people and understand social processes and values from this perspective and could lead to stereotyping (Wiśniewska-Brogowska.).

The topic-based approach concentrates on more general and cross-sectional topics which involve various cultural issues. According to Alan McLean (1994, cited in Wiśniewska- Brogowska), a "topic-based approach can provide an oblique yet original encounter with British life and culture. It deals with key elements of current British life, such as class, privatisation, education, health, not in isolation but within a series of unifying contexts." Wiśniewska-Brogowska argues that the topic-based approach to the teaching of culture brings life to class and develops a more holistic and integrated view of the target culture. She goes on to say that "knowing about the people who use the language, understanding their behaviours, beliefs and customs increases cultural awareness and promotes greater

personal interest both in the language and the culture." Durant (1997: 31), who is also in favour of the topic- based approach, stresses that learning should take place "on the basis of analytic and comparative methods."

The problem-oriented approach aims at getting learners interested in the other culture and encourages them to do some research on their own. Seelye (1993: 47) sees the teacher's role in defining the problem that interests learners. He claims that the more precise a problem is the easier it is for a learner to reach the desired outcome. The teacher should also guide learners in the bibliographic work. He claims that rather than be told to read a book on the general topic chosen, students can be taught to skim and to read carefully only limited sections that are germane to their specific area of interest. Otherwise, the student will fast become bogged down in the fantastic explosion of knowledge that threatens to engulf all scholars, especially those in science

and social science. (Seelye 1993: 47) This is an important remark to consider, given the amount of material that is accessible to learners today. The result of student research should be a report, either written or presented orally.

The task-oriented approach is also based on learners' own research. Differently from the previous one it is characterised by co-operative tasks. Learners work in pairs or small groups on different aspects of the other culture. They share and discuss their findings with others in order to form a more complete

picture. Lastly, learners interpret the information within the context of the other culture and compare it with their own. (Tomalin and Stempleski 1993: 9).

The skill-centred approach differs from the above-given approaches in a sense that it is more practical and might be useful for those who need to live within the target-language community. It aims at developing learners' skills, which they may need to manage the issues involved in (mis) communication between cultures/societies. It does not primarily mean knowledge of the other culture. According to Bolt, the skill-centred approach emphasises awareness and skills as much as content, the present and future as much as past and, lastly, similarities in cultures as much as differences. He goes on to say that methodologically this means:

➢ the raising and exploring of open questions rather than answering of the closed ones;

➢ what can be done at the end of a lesson is as important as what isknown;

➢ the process of an activity is as important as theproduct;

➢ cultural input is insufficient, cultural outcomes areessential;

➢ the learners' involvement is as important as the material the teacherprovides;

➢ investigatory attitudes to develop the skills of finding, evaluating, analysing and finally

➢ communicating aspects ofculture;

➢ teachers and learners working alongside one another to common goals;

➢ language is central and fore grounded.

No matter what approach is used, it is important that the teaching of culture "never lose [s] sight of the individual" (Brooks 1964, cited in Seelye 1993: 135). Seelye (ibid.) goes on to say that the focus should be on "how societal values, institutions, language, and the land affect the thought and lifestyle of someone living in the culture we are studying." Second, comparison of one's own and the other culture is important.

Strategies and Techniques for Teaching Culture

In order to translate the goals for teaching culture into classroom practice, we need to follow specific Strategies and Techniques:

Strategies:

- The lecture

- Native informants

- Audio-taped interviews

- Video-taped interviews/Observational dialogs

- Using authentic readings and realia for cross-cultural understanding (a four-stage approach to a cultural reading of authentic materials is very effective to lead students through the process of guided exploration and discovery: 1- Thinking, 2- Looking, 3- Learning, 4- Integrating)

Every technique serves a particular purpose. The material should fulfill an objective.

Techniques:

- Cultural Islands

- Culture Capsules

- Culture Clusters

- Culture Assimilators

- Critical Incidents/Problem Solving

- Culture Mini-Dramas

- Cultoons

- Culture Quiz

- Selling Points

1- Cultural Island:

From the first day of class teachers should have prepared (create) a cultural island in their classrooms. **Posters**, **pictures, flags**, **food, maps**, **signs**, and **realia** of many kinds are essential in helping students develop a mental image.

- Assigning students **foreign names** from the first day can increase student interest.

- **Short presentations on a topic of interest** with appropriate pictures or slides add to this mental image. Start students off by making them aware of the influence of various foreign cultures in this country.

- Introduce students to the borrowed words in their native language or the place-names of our country. This helps students to realize they already know many words in the target language. Some of the foods they eat are another example of the influence of foreign cultures.

- A good introductory activity is to send students on **cultural scavenger hunts** to supermarkets and department stores and have them make lists of imported goods.

2- Culture Assimilators:

The culture assimilator provides the student with 75 to 100 episodes of target cultural behavior. Culture assimilators consist of **short (usually written)**

descriptions of an incident or situation where interaction takes place between at least one person from the target culture and persons from the native culture. The description is followed by four possible choices about the meaning of the behavior, action, or words of the participants in the interaction with emphasis on the behavior, actions, or words of the target language individual(s).

Students read the description in the assimilator and then choose which of the four options they feel is the correct interpretation of the interaction. Once all students have made their individual choices, the teacher leads a discussion about why particular options are correct or incorrect in interpretation. Written copies of the discussion issues can be handed out to students although they do not have to be. It is imperative that the teacher plan what issues the discussion of each option should cover. Culture assimilators are good methods of giving students understanding about cultural information and they may even promote emotional empathy or affect if students have strong feelings about one or more of the options.

3- Critical Incidents/ Problem Solving:

Critical incidents are another method for teaching culture. Critical incidents are descriptions of incidents or situations where the learner is put in a critical situation and asked how a native speaker would behave in such a situation. S/he has to make some kind of decision. Most of the situations could happen to any individual; they do not require that there be intercultural interaction as there is with culture assimilators.

Critical incidents do not require as much time as cultural assimilators or capsules. So generally when this method is used, more than one critical incident is presented. The procedure of a critical incident is to have students read the incident independently and make individual decisions about what they would do. Then the students are grouped into small groups to discuss their decisions and why they made them the way they did. Then all the groups discuss their decisions and the reasons behind them.

The role of the teacher is to explain first the behavior of the native speaker. i.e. a native speaker would do this in such a situation and then let a space for the student to show the difference between his culture and the target culture. If the class takes place in an EFL environment, the native speaker information would have to be gathered by the teacher from reading or from contact with expatriates.

4- Culture Capsules:

Culture capsules are generally prepared out of class by a student but presented during class time in 5 or 10 minutes. A Culture capsule consists of a paragraph or so of explanation of one minimal difference between a native custom and a custom in the target culture along with several illustrative photos and relevant realia.

Culture capsules are one of the best-known methods for teaching culture. A culture capsule is a brief description of some aspect of the target language culture

(e.g., what is customarily eaten for meals and when those meals are eaten, marriage customs, etc.) followed by, or incorporated with contrasting information from the students' native language culture. The contrasting information can be provided by the teacher, but it is usually more effective to have the students themselves point out the contrasts.

Culture capsules are usually done orally with the teacher giving a brief lecture on the chosen cultural point and then leading a discussion about the differences between cultures. Some visual information, such as in handouts or overhead transparencies or pictures, supporting the lecture can also be used.

5- Culture Clusters:

A culture cluster is simply a group of three or more illustrated **culture capsules** on related themes/topics (about the target life) + one 30 minute classroom simulation/skit (performance) that integrates the information contained in the capsules (the teacher acts as narrator to guide the students). For example, a student prepares a task and presents it in the class. The task will cover one aspect of the target culture (customs, music, monuments, wedding etc). The teacher will provide more information and ask to compare this custom being discussed between the target culture and the native culture. Culture capsules and clusters are good methods for giving students knowledge and some intellectual knowledge about the cultural aspects being explained.

6- Culture Mini-Dramas:

Mini-dramas consist of three to five brief episodes in which misunderstandings are portrayed, in which there are examples of miscommunication. Each episode is followed by an open-ended question discussion led by the teacher (comparing the target culture and the native one, comparing the situation being performed in both cultures to rise cultural awareness).

With mini-dramas, scripts (scenarios) are handed out and students are assigned to perform the parts. After each act, the teacher asks students (not necessarily the ones performing in the drama) what the actions and words of the characters in the drama mean and leads them to make judgments about the characters in the play. After all of the scenes have been portrayed, students are asked to reinterpret what they have seen.

7- Culture Cultoons:

Cultoons are like visual culture assimilators. Students are given a series of (usually) four pictures depicting points of surprise or possible misunderstanding for persons coming into the target culture. The situations are also described verbally by the teacher or by the students who read the accompanying written descriptions. Students may be asked if they think the reactions of the characters in the cultoons seem appropriate or not.

After the misunderstandings or surprises are clearly in mind, the students read explanations of what was happening and why there was misunderstanding.

Cultoons generally promote understanding of cultural facts and some understanding, but they do not usually give real understanding of emotions involved in cultural misunderstandings.

8- Selling Points: (a strategy)

In order to create a cultural texture, the teacher should be careful not to portray only good or bad sides of a culture. The teacher should find a point where he sells the good side of a culture and at the same time shows the negative aspects of it. Activities and materials should portray different aspects of the culture. In other words, we need to 'sell' different views of the culture to our students. Introducing 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. Behavior

Historical vs. Modern

Old people vs. Young people

City life vs. Country life

Stated beliefs vs. Actual behavior

9- Culture Quiz:

Quizzes can be used to test the students' knowledge about a particular culture or to test materials that you have previously taught. They are also useful in learning new information. The role of the teacher is to correct students answers.

Another activity is **<u>noticing</u>**: As students watch a video or are engaged with some other materials, you can ask them to 'notice' particular features. For example, they could watch a video of a target-culture wedding and note all the differences with their own culture.

Prediction: when you are telling a story, you can stop at a certain point and ask the students to predict how it will continue. Prediction can also useful is quizzes.