

Culturally Distant Discoursal and Linguistic Patterns Experienced and Learned through Museums

Wasima Shehzad
Muhammad Safeer Awan

Abstract

Museums are places where people, living or long gone, leave their linguistic footprints. Those footprints may be found in the ancient or modern manuscripts, or statues in the reading/writing postures in museums. For developing inter-cultural understanding in language teaching classes, various activities can be derived and shaped from the materials available in museums. It is important especially in our contemporary times where the world is increasingly being divided on the lines of 'cultural-clash thesis'. When the citizens of a society neither share the same language nor the same world-view, there is a greater potential for miscommunication. This misunderstanding results from uninterpretability stemming from alternative and at times conflicting systems of value and belief (Candlin in Smith, 1987:2).

The paper presents how ELT classrooms can be used to explore inherited cultures and disposition of its users with varied language backgrounds gaining experience from our museums. Understanding culturally accepted different ways of thinking, reasoning and feeling, and the language used to express them is one of the various aspects of the use of museums apart from their primary purpose of collection and preservation. When students visit museums, they draw on their natural sensibilities, linguistic knowledge and inherited forms of 'culturally sanctioned discourse patterns', thus triggering need to communicate with their teachers as well as peers. Complete understanding of distant civilizations is a difficult task as cultural and discoursal patterns are multilayered and need to be uncovered sequentially. The notion of cultural and linguistic sensibility may be of relevance to a variety of academic disciplines but it certainly has great significance to language learning and teaching. The paper also deals with the pedagogical implications of the discussion.

Key words: culture; discourse; museum; language teaching

Introduction

Smith (1976) argues that non-native speakers do not need to internalize the cultural norms of native speakers of that language, because the purpose of teaching an international language is to facilitate the communication of learners' own ideas and culture. Adaskou et.al. (1990) as reported by McKay (2004), summarize that cultural component in language teaching can promote international understanding, deepen understanding of one's own culture, facilitate learners' visits to foreign countries, and motivate learners. Adaskou et al. (1990) criticized the inclusion of Western culture in the teaching materials. They argue that such a thing can not only demotivate but compel students to compare their culture with a supposedly advanced culture creating discontentment among the students about their own culture also.

Contrarily, our contention is that this opinion is Euro-centric. Suzuki (1999:264) believes that Japan must fight against the subtle form of Western imperialism that suggests the need to emulate everything Western, including the English language. He attributes this trend to mental colonization. He also calls this 'Auto-colonization' which takes place gradually and unconsciously. On the contrary, Smith (1976) argued that English no longer needs to be linked to the culture of those who speak it as a first language. However, the 'study of any language, spoken by a people who live under conditions different from our own and possess a different culture, must be carried out in conjunction with the study of their culture and of their environment' (Malinowski, 1923:303).

This paper underscores the importance and relevance of the museums and art galleries for pedagogical purposes, in particular for those involved in an area as culturally-sensitive as language teaching. 'There is a greater potential for miscommunication in a society where there is increasing mutual dependence among citizens who share neither the same language nor the same world-view. Such misunderstandings may have unintelligibility as an immediate cause

but more particularly derives from uninterpretability, itself stemming from alternative, and at times conflicting, systems of value and belief” (Candlin in Smith,1987:22). One can imagine the difficulties in learning and understanding culturally distant discoursal and linguistic patterns experienced and learned through museums.

When we are unable to communicate to real people and are dependent, for information, on the museums only, the chances of misunderstanding distant and alien cultures are maximized. Then why do we want our students to be exposed to the inanimate world of museums and the complexity of arts? The reason being that cross cultural understanding enhances the appropriate use of one’s linguistic competencies. In the global village that we live in today we need to have harmonious intercultural relations to move around smoothly. Thus an awareness of cultural differences and understanding what appropriate action needs to be taken in unique cross-cultural situations becomes essential. ‘The knowledge of cultural difference and self-knowledge of how we usually respond to those differences can make us aware of hidden prejudices and stereotypes which are barriers to tolerance, understanding, and good communication’ as discussed by Matikainen and Duffy (2000: 40) which is the ultimate goal of learning a foreign / second language.

Here the question arises, why use museums for this purpose? These past experiences, handed down from generation to generation and preserved in the museums influence our values of what is attractive and what is not, what is acceptable behavior, and what is right and wrong. The museums are an important source of teaching/ learning about Culture, History, Language and Communication because of the element of curiosity and discovery associated with them.

The review of literature in this area reveals that a certain dichotomy between the learning emphasis in a museum environment and that in a traditional ELT classroom exists. In an ELT class, the teacher naturally focuses four skills of reading, writing, listening, and

speaking, as well as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. In contrast, in museums the visiting students are often asked to focus on “observation not reading” (Durbin, 1999:95) of the artifacts. Thus personalization not only makes the learning teaching process efficient but it gets accelerated also.

Methodology

Approaches to inquiry (Creswell, 2007:107-109) or strategies of inquiry (Creswell, 2009:3) provide a focused direction for procedures in a research design. For the present paper, qualitative approach of research has been followed which focuses on a single concept or phenomenon, studies the context, makes interpretations and creates agenda for change or reform (Creswell, 2009:3). Various aspects of the significance of teaching English through museums which provide holistic account of the issue under study were identified and elaborated by developing a complex picture of the problem. This was followed by devising some practical classroom activities including some based on MICASE (Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English). Simpson et.al. (202)

Results and Discussion

The significant lexical items related to the topic were searched in Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE) and the results are given below, listed according to the frequency of the occurrences.

Lexical Items	Occurrences	Remarks
culture	322	most frequent usage
museum	42	
traditions	24	
artifact	18	
heritage	16	
legacy	03	least frequent usage

Table 1. Frequencies of culture related lexical items in MICASE

An utterance from real life is never detached from the situation in which it has been uttered. Each verbal statement by a human being aims and functions as the expression of some thought or feeling actual at that moment and in that situation. Thus 'language ought to be regarded and studied against the background of human activities and as a mode of human behavior in practical matters. Language functions as a link in concerted human activity and behavior (Malinowski, 1923). Thus understanding the context of situation becomes essential in the language learning process. Corpus-based techniques can provide a conducive environment to learn the authentic contexts. Thus the examples of the museum related vocabulary taken from MICASE not only tell us about the frequency of the words' usage in the corpus but their context line can also be increased with the help of softwares such as WordSmith tools (Scott, 2000) to understand exactly how that word is actually used in a real life situation in an academic setting (examples below).

MICASE Search Results

Concordance Search Results

Sort filters: 1: None 2: None 3: None sort

1 to 322 of 322 matches

File #	Key Word in Context				Sp. ID
Total matches: 322					
ADV103SU068	1	cul- in quotes uh folk	culture	of, of previous black musics	S1
ADV103SU068	2	it's and it's nothing but	culture	distributing, smashed down your throat	S2
ADV103SU068	3	you know like much of	culture,	much of high culture much	S2
ADV103SU068	4	of culture, much of high	culture	much of it is junk	S2
ADV103SU068	5	stuff cuz that's just how	culture	works you know? that's how	S2
ADV283SG135	6	conveying aspects of the academic	culture	that they're very steeped in	S1
ADV283SG135	7	what we call the academic	culture,	uh translate across or bridge	S2
ADV283SG135	8	bridge between uh the popular	culture	which is what we're thinking	S2
ADV283SG135	9	s- the dominant the dominant	culture.	course then there's the school	S2
ADV283SG135	10	course then there's the school	culture		S2
ADV283SG135	11	very direct sort of popular	culture	component. but, it's more than	S1
ADV283SG135	12	yeah we have an academic	culture,		S2
ADV283SG135	13	we're always taking about academic	culture	and popular culture, but i	S2
ADV283SG135	14	about academic culture and popular	culture,	but i was gonna break	S2
ADV283SG135	15	be a somewhat more popular	culture	version okay informal talk about	S2
ADV283SG135	16	we have the formal popular	culture,	which we'll call school culture	S2
ADV283SG135	17	culture, which we'll call school	culture,	uh and, just plain pop	S2
ADV283SG135	18	uh and, just plain pop	culture	uh uh uh uh underage	S2
ADV283SG135	19	and she responds, in popular	culture,	<L> rather than academic discourse, this	S2
ADV353SU094	20	by the success of Chinese	culture.	mm. ooh that sounds like	S1
ADV353SU094	21	this incredible, strength to Chinese	culture.	i mean it's, minimum twenty	S1
ADV353SU094	22	hell just unbelievably successful. Roman	culture	isn't around anymore Greek culture	S1

MICASE Search Results

Concordance Search Results

Sort filters: 1: 2: 3:

1 to 42 of 42 matches

File #	Key Word in Context	Sp. ID
Total matches: 42		
COL385MU054	1 Lord Kelvin. it's in a museum , now, but if you look	S3
COL605MX039	2 and historical site interpretation for museum educators. she's currently working on	S4
COL999MX036	3 biggest potential orphan um a museum being um a potential orphan	S2
COL999MX040	4 when the Air and Space Museum opened up and the IMAX	S6
DEF305MX131	5 the herbaria at Michigan, Field Museum and Catolican University in Quito	S2
LEL175JU154	6 the fourth floor of the museum , the bird collection is on	S1
LEL220JU071	7 been to, um the British Museum , you can go to the	S2
LEL300SU020	8 an assistant curator at the Museum of Modern Art absolutely terrific	S1
LEL300SU020	9 in an art mu- art museum just kinda, going from one	S1
LEL320JU143	10 be speaking at the University Museum of Art tomorrow night. and	S1
LEL320JU143	11 leaves from right outside the Museum of Art on State Street	S1
LEL320JU147	12 from the gallery and the museum space, and it seems to	S1
LEL320JU147	13 the steps of the Metropolitan Museum , and also inside the Whitney	S1
LEL320JU147	14 this is his National Atomic Museum , Kirtland Air Force Base nineteen	S1
LEL542SU096	15 told myself go to a museum with them. but i showed	S7
LES320SU085	16 the Sculpture Garden of the Museum of Modern Art. and what's	S1
LES320SU085	17 should go to the British Museum and tell us what you	S1
LES320SU085	18 and the British Museum in London (he's got his	S1
OFC300JU149	19 a performance at the um museum , it was like uh, this	S4
OFC320SU153	20 to see me about, a museum piece. <I> okay. so what i	S1
OFC320SU153	21 not having these in a museum	S1
SEM545MG083	22 fun. enjoying like a good museum , rice make some like art.	S2

MICASE Search Results

Concordance Search Results					
Sort filters: 1: <div>None</div> 2: <div>None</div> 3: <div>None</div> <div>sort</div>					
1 to 24 of 24 matches					
File #	Key Word in Context			Sp. ID	
Total matches: 24					
ADV285SG135	1	fit very nicely with the	traditions	that MAC A was originally	S2
COL140MX114	2	elements from Chinese po- performance	traditions	at large. in the words	S2
COL605MX132	3	is what African t- uh,	traditions	did except the missionaries came	S1
DEF420MX022	4	conceptual borrowing from classical Indian	traditions	SEC> well i mean that's	S1
DIS315JU101	5	bad women, to emphasize the	traditions	of famial relations, and acceptable	S1
DIS315JU101	6	past is, they emphasize the	traditions	of famial relations, and acceptable	S1
DIS315JU101	7	celebrate... ha- the heroes, and	traditions	of the past. and the	S1
DIS315JU101	8	it is still exhuming the	traditions	of the past to base	S1
LEL215SU150	9	and those states retain, their	traditions	and those traditions will sometimes	S1
LEL215SU150	10	retain, their traditions and those	traditions	will sometimes shape, the broader	S1
LEL215SU150	11	uh we'll look at thestrical	traditions	which grew up in Greece	S1
LEL215SU150	12	grew up in Greece, athletic	traditions	which come from Greece, um	S1
LEL215SU150	13	they are different from, Italian	traditions,	is that they have a	S1
LEL215SU150	14	and very often non-Roman	traditions	and non-Roman ideas will	S1
LEL300SU076	15	advantage of the... the weighty	traditions	Mama Elena tries to impose	S1
LEL320JU143	16	in Courbet's confrontation with artistic	traditions	then, Courbet's effort to be	S1
LEL320JU143	17	makes art that challenges artistic	traditions.	art that's of it's own	S1
LEL320JU143	18	so it's about carrying on	traditions.	Manet's use of past art	S1
LES495JU063	19	common understanding common cultures	traditions	common war experience, common interest	S1
SEM140JG070	20	you'd, science and rival religious	traditions	which were flat out rejected	S4
SEM140JG070	21	the role of like commentarial	traditions	and stuff like, when you're	S2
TOU999JU030	22	it's one of the neatest,	traditions	here at the University of	S1

5. Traditional Values vs. Modern Values

Museums help as in acknowledging traditional values of the primitive cultures, such as respecting the intelligence of the elders.

Teaching Tips:

- a. **Discuss:** What would you do if you have to live according to this distant culture learnt through Museum? How would you feel? Are your values similar to or different from the traditional values?
- b. **Read & Reflect:** Have you or someone you know ever had to make a choice between two worlds, two ways of thinking or two ways of conducting your life? Discuss the difficulties

MICASE Search Results

Concordance Search Results

Sort filters: 1: 2: 3:

1 to 18 of 18 matches

File #	Key Word in Context				Sp. ID
Total matches: 18					
LES115MU151	1	research projects to be quite	artifact	specific you may not, find	S1
LES115MU151	2	settled on what kind of	artifact	uh what basic questions you're	S1
LES115MU151	3	to settle on your, your	artifact	of choice, that much you	S1
LES115MU151	4	theoretical methodo- methodological issues about	artifact	analysis material cultures and looking	S1
LES115MU151	5	might be uh a technomic	artifact	might be a hunting rifle	S1
LES115MU151	6	ecological and an ideotechnic historic	artifact	might be a rosary. a	S1
LES115MU151	7	that you can have one	artifact	do all three things. anyone	S1
LES115MU151	8	habit of thinking that your	artifact	type only only, serves one	S1
LES115MU151	9	which means where was an	artifact	found in rel- in the	S1
LES115MU151	10	last possible date that an	artifact	is used and <i>anti quem</i>	S10
LES115MU151	11	not necessarily rela- it's, an	artifact	telling you about the date	S1
LES115MU151	12	so, so you use an	artifact	to tell you one of	S1
LES115MU151	13	be an example of an	artifact	that can give me a	S1
MTG270SG049	14	isn't, a s- a strong	artifact	but, we you know we	S3
MTG400MX008	15	it's just it's just an	artifact.		S2
OFC320SU153	16	any kind of older, uh	artifact,	is the <i>num types of</i>	S1
OFC320SU153	17	the provenance of of an	artifact.	and what you usually have	S1
OFC320SU153	18	and thinking about, one particular	artifact		S1

1 to 18 of 18 matches

MICASE Search Results

Concordance Search Results					
Sort filters: 1: <input type="text" value="None"/> 2: <input type="text" value="None"/> 3: <input type="text" value="None"/> <input type="button" value="sort"/>					
1 to 16 of 16 matches					
File #	Key Word in Context				Sp. ID
Total matches: 16					
DEF420MX022	1	concerts, connected to the European	heritage,	while also offering, an escape	S2
LEL500JU034	2	to sort of our evolutionary	heritage,	(but) we're also gonna talk	S1
LEL500JU034	3	we're talking about our evolutionary	heritage,	or whether we're talking about	S1
LEL500JU034	4	asking is, does our evolutionary	heritage,	does the generations and generations	S1
LEL500JU034	5	our genetics, it's our evolutionary	heritage,	it's also possible to talk	S1
LEL500JU034	6	is because of our evolutionary	heritage,	maybe an_ a taste for	S1
LEL500JU034	7	my fault it's my evolutionary	heritage	i have no choice in	S1
LEL500JU034	8	there something about our biological	heritage	that shapes behavior? um is	S1
LEL500JU034	9	by appealing to our evolutionary	heritage?	the first person to make	S1
LES115MU151	10	community to remember its French	heritage,	it was not so important	S1
LES115MU151	11	important to remember the Spanish	heritage,	so as a result that	S1
LES115MU151	12	Spanish but, that Spanish uh,	heritage	for whatever reason, that i'm	S1
OFC115SU060	13	was kind of a right	heritage		S3
OFC115SU060	14	the other kind of, African	heritage,	point but it is right	S2
OFC115SU060	15	is about constructing an Afican,	heritage,		S3
STP355MG011	16	which are mostly bilingual um	heritage	speakers of Hindi, or another	S1

1 to 16 of 16 matches

MICASE Search Results

Concordance Search Results					
Sort filters: 1: <input type="text" value="None"/> 2: <input type="text" value="None"/> 3: <input type="text" value="None"/> <input type="button" value="sort"/>					
1 to 3 of 3 matches					
File #		Key Word in Context			Sp. ID
Total matches: 3					
COL200MX133	1	Naval Ordinance Award. Professor Bachmann's	legacy	to the Department of ch	S1
LES115MU151	2	uh it's called Madam John's	Legacy,	if you're ever a tourist	S1
STP095SU139	3	her career is, her greatest	legacy	will always be her unwavering	S12

1 to 3 of 3 matches

Some teaching activities regarding language teaching with reference to cultural component (adapted from Matikainen and Duffy, 2000) are suggested below.

Cultural Advisor: Place the students into two groups. Tell the students of the first group that they are going to pretend to be the

Cultural Advisors for someone who is experiencing a problem with a person from a different culture. Ask students of the second group to write letters to the Cultural Advisor in which they ask for advice on a cultural problem that they have experienced. The Cultural Advisors then write replies to the senders suggesting solutions to the problems. Later read the letters with the class and discuss different solutions and view points on the specific cultural problem.

Role-play: Teacher can devise various problematic cross-cultural situations for students who can act them as a role-play.

Culture Project: Students can do a project about their own culture. The project can be in written or oral form, either as a writing assignment or as a PowerPoint presentation. This may later be extended to a cultural exhibition arranged by students.

Terminology/Vocabulary

Vocabulary serves as the basic tool of learning language so the terminology related essentially with culture needs to be tackled first. On the basis of some specific terms and their simple explanations such as the following, vocabulary exercises and games can be made by teachers. The sources of the following glossary are: Matikainen and Duffy, 2000; Samovar et.al., 1997:237-81 Underwood, C. and Underwood, R. 2004).

aboriginal	Being one of the original inhabitants of a region.
affinity	A feeling of closeness to someone or something because you share interests, beliefs, or qualities.
ancestors	Persons from whom one is descended especially those more remote than grandparents.
behaviors	Behaviors are the way we act based on our learned beliefs and values.
beliefs	Belief is our conviction in the truth of something that we learned by living in our culture; they are the core of our actions and tell us how to behave in the world. Our beliefs are related to our values.

culture	A culture is a group of people who share a background because of their common language, knowledge, beliefs, views, values, and behaviors. Every culture has its own unique patterns of communication, viewpoints, and expressions which are common/ shared among the people of that specific culture. Consequently, people's behavior, their perception of the world; and quality and type of interaction is affected.
cultural pattern	A cultural pattern is the collective term to describe a cluster of interrelated cultural orientations. These include cultural behaviors influenced by values.
diversity	Diversity is the state of being different or of unlikeness (dictionary definition). In the context of society, diversity means difference in various factors that interact to define the society of a particular culture. In a homogenous culture, most of the people have similar religion, music, art, dance, foods and educational levels etc. Whereas in a heterogeneous culture, there is diversity of cultural features as it includes many ethnic groups.
dominant culture	A dominant culture or cultural pattern is the one that represents the majority or the largest number of people.
heterogeneous society	A heterogeneous society is one in which members of the society from diverse cultural groups. Usually there are difference of economic wealth, educational levels, and social status among the groups who live in the society.
homogeneous society	A homogeneous society is one in which the majority of the members share the same cultural beliefs, attitudes, and values, and there is little difference in the economic wealth of or social distance between the members of the society.

kinship	A relationship among family members, or others, based on shared customs, beliefs, or values.
ritual	A procedure that is regularly followed during a ceremony of special event to highlight its importance.
stereotype	A stereotype is the belief or opinion held by one group that the majority of a different group can be classified by the actions, appearance, or attitudes of a few members of that group.
value dimension	A value dimension is a set of interrelated values that exist along a continuum of relative importance. This is used to refer to cultural behaviors in all cultures.

Museums help us in acknowledging traditional values of the primitive cultures, such as respecting the intelligence of the elders. Here classroom activities involving a comparison of traditional values with modern values (adapted from Underwood, 2004) are documented.

Discuss: What would you do if you have to live according to this distant culture (any culture chosen by the teacher and agreed by the students for the lesson) learnt through Museum? How would you feel? Are your values similar to or different from the traditional values?

Read & Reflect: Have you or someone you know ever had to make a choice between two worlds, two ways of thinking or two ways of conducting your life? Discuss the difficulties in making such a decision and the consequences of the choice you made. Ask your students to read Linda Hogan's novel *Power* which describes a character who must choose between two ways of life: the American world and the culture of her elders who live in their own community with their own traditions. What are some other traditional values she writes about? What are some of the traditional values you hold?

Personalize: Traditional values, ancestral knowledge, and the history are a way to remember and respect these cultures. Ask the students to

think about the traditional values their family holds, the customs and knowledge their ancestors have passed down to them, and their family's history. Tell them to make a list of their family's values and customs and to create a poster or write an essay about their family's history. The students may include any traditional values or customs they observe, special knowledge or talents their family has passed on to them or other members of their family, and any events that have been important to their family. For instance, gathering of male members of the family including young boys around the animal to be slaughtered at the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha, seeing the blood flow or touching the knife and praying together to understand the spirit of sacrificing the dearest things in the name of Allah.

Ethnicity is a critical issue of most multicultural societies. Anthropologists describe ethnic as: 'A group possessing some degree of coherence and solidarity composed of people who are or at least latently, aware, of having common origins and interests'. According to Cambridge Encyclopedia, 'It is a group of individuals identified on the basis of race, color, language and territory' whereas Furnivali (1956:2) is of the opinion that ethnic is a 'group of individual living side by side but not intermingling with each other'. Enloe (1975:15) sums up the discussion on ethnicity by stating that 'People grouped together on the basis of territory, professions, language and geography without conflicting with each other until and unless they are triggered to do'. Some of the factors influencing ethnicity are:

- Colonial rule and its impact
- Neglected ideological stances
- Language issue
- Uneven economic development
- Instable political system

Definition: Give students different definitions of ethnicity to discuss and ask them to come up with their own definition. Then they speculate on the ethnicity of the people around them by observing and discussing the various artifacts placed in the museum.

Seminar: Ask the students to arrange a seminar on ‘How does ethnicity influences the development of a country’?

The Discovery Museums encourage children, families, and educators to explore the wonders of science, nature, humanities, and the arts by engaging visitors in hands-on experiences. Field trips may be arranged with pre planned museum kits having worksheets like the Vancouver Museum has for varying levels of students. A pedagogical project about the museums would not be complete without actually visiting and exploring the local museums. For arranging field trips along with worksheets, see Shehzad (2006:48-54) who has outlined the worksheets and teaching ideas.

The Organization of World Heritage Cities (OWHC) was created to assist member cities adapt and improve their management methods in relation to the specific requirements of having a site inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Some of the World Heritage sites listed below can be used by teachers.

- Edinburgh – the World City of Literature
- Liverpool’s Docklands
- The Trading Port of Visby in Sweden
- Old Quarter of Luxembourg
- Dresden in Germany
- Lava Cave, Jeju, Korea

For example, Lava Cave, Jeju, Korea as shown in the following picture, which resembles a tiger’s strips was formed by lava. It also contains stalagmite, which are substances found only in lime caves, giving it high academic value for the students of ESP and EAP. This can also be used for teaching descriptions and narratives. However, as Tomalin (2008: 48) raises the question, “The challenge is to initiate a debate on what and how to teach to help develop our children as international citizens of the world, using English ... as their lingua franca.”



Dianne Swann-Wright (1865-1954) guest curator of the exhibition at the Legacy Museum of African American History, titled “Deep in my Heart: The Rise of Jim Crow in Central Virginia”, said, “It is a painful reminder of what life was like in a segregated society. There are many feelings left over from this period that are just as tangible as things you can touch with your hand.” Another official, Swann-Wright said: “We’re considering feelings to be artifacts,” As a visitor enters the main exhibit room, the first sight is a door with a stencil of the words “Colored Men.” This rare artifact was a bathroom door in the old Suhling’s Tobacco Factory. As the building was being renovated Josh Owen of Landmark Asset Services discovered the door, which had been bricked over. Not only the entrance doors but separate restrooms (washrooms) were also a major feature of segregation between whites and blacks in the United States. Thus, by showing such artifacts, a classroom discussion or essay writing competition on topics such as segregation, prejudice and racism etc. can be arranged. Later the students may be asked to read the novel *To Kill A Mockingbird*, on the similar theme.

Shanon Brennan Lynchburg (2005) reports that the timeline for the above exhibit ran from the end of the Civil War when blacks were freed, through the societal-changing Brown Board of Education Supreme Court decision, which declared that separate was not equal. Thus, museums can be an effective source of teaching history by integrating it with English language lessons

Music is important component of any culture. The spoken word in many cultures was often expressed through songs which sometimes were accompanied by dance. The use of clay pot drums, rattles and cane flutes were considered the means of self-expression on many different levels of communication. The stomp dance was a fundamental part of many religious and social meetings. Both men and women participated as headmen sang songs and women provided musical accompaniment with bright head gears and turtle shell shackles worn on their legs. In some cultures these elements of social and religious life were, and still are, a vital part of identity and connectedness. Such comparisons can lead to a discussion on the concepts, climate, geographical conditions and their influence on the language spoken in that particular area. Try using terms such as blizzard, dusting, flurry, frost, hail, hardtack, powder, sleet, slush and snowflake.

Varying beliefs found in the different cultures of the world, present or past and alive or dead may also be used by English language teachers. Non-verbal communication through body language, sign language, facial expressions, use of personal space and silence may be included in the discussion. Beliefs such as the following may be used:

- Time is now and ever flowing; there is no need to hurry.
- Respect for elders and other adults (teachers), is NOT to look into their eyes, but rather, to glance away.
- A unique relationship with nature is to be part of the circle of life, and entwined with the creator, mother earth, self and family (as a people).

- Lack of belief in ownership, so things such as the mother earth, nature and its natural resources, possessions, individual skills are to be shared among each other, not owned or fenced in, or kept from those in need, because all was given by the creator.

The concepts such as the following may also be used. Present Oriented, Extended Family, Giving/Sharing, Interdependence, Elders and Children Valued, Cooperation, Mystical Beliefs, Intelligence is Intuitive, Patience and Modesty, Non-Interference in Relationships, Compact Living, Community Oriented, Linear Perspective, Nuclear Family, Saving, Interdependence, Youth Hold the Future, Self-Reliance, Practical Empiricism, Intelligence is Intellectual, Competition and Aggression, Interference in Relationships, Separate Space for Family Members, Individual Oriented.

Conclusion

The mission of the museums and art collections is to reclaim and preserve to carry heritage into the future by providing a means to educate people. For instance, the Mission Statement of the Chickasaw National Museums is to ‘honor and preserve our past in order to enhance our future’. Are we still facing the same old issues? How are we dealing with them? Such like questions can help in the convergence of significant events of the history relating them to the present.

In addition to the above mentioned aspects, cultural use of space, time, clothing, oral traditions (story-telling), written language (script, calligraphy), living styles etc. can also be exploited for language teaching purposes. The museum gift shops offer a variety of souvenirs, books, music and related materials. Pottery, jewelry, beadwork and other artwork by artists are also a rich source of language production and can motivate students not only to speak but also to write about them.

Thus, in the wake of modernization, the traditional cultures need not to be neglected. In today’s high-tech world with state of the art technologies where Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and Corpus-based techniques are in vogue, museums and their

artifacts do not remain things of the past anymore. They can interestingly be explored and exploited for language learning purposes as language is an immensely important element of the complex and seamless fabric of the total culture of a society (Strevens, 1987:169-78). Material designers and course developers with a little effort can make excellent use of these rich cultural resources. The authors conclude that not only museum materials but also other facilities such as art galleries, even botanical gardens, have great potential for creative writing classes as well as for providing flexible language learning opportunities for ELT classes.

References

- Adaskou, K., D. Britten, and B. Fahsi** (1990). Design decisions on the cultural content of a secondary English course for Morocco. *ELT Journal* 44 (1):3–10.
- Candlin, N. C.** (1987). Beyond Description to Explanation in Cross-Cultural Discourse. In: Larry E. Smith (Ed.), *Discourse Across Cultures: Strategies in World Englishes*. Prentice Hall: New York.
- Creswell, J. W.** (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions* (2nd ed). Thousand Oaks: Sage
- Creswell, J. W.** (2009) *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Sage Publications Inc.
- Durbin, G.** (1999). Improving worksheets. In E. Hooper-Greenhill (Ed.), *The educational role of the museum* (pp. 92-98). London: Routledge.
- Enloe, C.** (2000). *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives*. University of California Press: California.
- Furnivall, J. S.** (1956) *Colonial Policy & Practice: A Comparative Study of Burma & Netherlands India*. New York: New York University Press.
- Lynchburg, B. S.** (2005). News and Advance Virginia, June 23.
- McKay, L. S.** (2004). Western Culture and the Teaching of English as an International Language. *English Teaching Forum*. 42(2): 10-14.
- Malinowski, B.** (1923). The problem of meaning in primitive languages. In: C. K.

Ogden and I.A. Richards (Eds.), *The Meaning of Meaning*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, pp.296-336.

Matikainen, T. and Duffy, B. C. (2000). Developing Cultural Understanding. *English Teaching FORUM*. 38 (3): 40-49.

Simpson, R. C., S. L. Briggs, J. Ovens, and J. M. Swales. (2002) *The Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English*. Ann Arbor, MI: The Regents of the University of Michigan.

Samovar, L. A. and R. E. Porter (Eds.) (1999). *International Communication: A reader*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co. pp:237-281

Scott, M. (2000). *Word Smith Tools*. Oxford University Press.

Shehzad, W. (2006). *Techniques and Activities*. Bookman Publishers: Teipei

Smith, L. (1976). English as an international auxiliary language. *RELC Journal* 7 (2) pp:38-43

Strevens, P. (1987). Cultural barriers to language learning. In: *Discourse Across Cultures: Strategies in World Englishes*. Smith, L. (Ed). New York: Prentice Hall.

Suzuki, T. (1999). *Nihonjin wa naze Eigo ga dekinai ka* [Why the Japanese people are no good at English]. Iwanami Shoten: Tokyo.

The Cambridge Encyclopedia (1991). David Crystal (Ed.), Cambridge University Press: London P. 421.

Tomalin, B. (2008). Making culture happen in the English language classroom. *Think articles*. The British Council. V. 16: 48

Underwood, C. and Underwood, R. (2004). The First Americans: A brief history. *English Teaching FORUM*, 42 (4): 36-40.

Website: <http://www.chickasaw.net/heritage> (2007)