

DISCUSSION OF SOCIO-CULTURAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS ON LANGUAGE ACQUISITION WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO OMANI LEARNERS

YEDIDI MERCY RANI

EFL Teacher, Muscat College, Ruwi, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

ABSTRACT

There is a growing focus on the role that socio-cultural and psychological factors play in second/foreign language achievement (Gardner & McIntyre, 1993; Gardner & Trebly, 1955). The purpose of this study is to identify the socio-cultural and psychological factors of the EFL learners and how they respond to the target language culture. The challenges the teachers usually face in an EFL classroom are lack of motivation among students to language learning mainly in the productive skills: speaking and writing. Students hesitate to converse in English, and fail to write sentences with appropriate syntax as they lack schematic knowledge which is socially acquired and depends on the learner's culture and the native language culture. Teachers have no effective instructional strategies to overcome the problems, as they lack awareness of the learners' culture and ways to align this lack of awareness with the target language culture and the learning styles of their learners. This paper explores the cultural and psychological factors of the EFL learners with special reference to Omani learners and their impact on target language acquisition. This paper presents how the teaching resources and teaching practices could be adapted to align the target language culture with the cultural background of the learners.

KEYWORDS: Socio-cultural and Psychological Factors, Target Language culture, Affective Learning Styles, Innovative Teaching Practices

INTRODUCTION

Culture refers to traditions, beliefs, values, customs, way of life, and social organization of a group or country. Language acquisition involves the learners' native culture and the target language culture they are learning. Baker (2003) proposes certain principles that teachers and learners should both know in language acquisition. Awareness of the culture of the learner is essential in language learning as culture and language combine together to enable the learner respond positively to the learning environment. An EFL classroom comprises learners from different cultural backgrounds and thereby endowed with unique learning styles.

A learning style is defined as "The composite of characteristic cognitive, affective, and physiological factors that serve as relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment." Schmeck (1983) (p.2, 3).

Background of the Study

The major population of Oman is Arab and the country portrays a wide variety of cultural groups and local languages. It is said that about more than 10 different languages are heard every day in the Souks of Muscat city and

Muttra, and less than half of these are spoken by the locals. A few languages are no longer heard as a consequence to Oman's fiscal growth and influence of expats of different countries.

To be precise (National Report on Quality Education in Oman – Ministry of Education 2004), about more than 10 languages are used as first languages. In addition to Arabic, other languages like Persian, Baluchi, Pushtu, Swahili and Somali are spoken. Apart from the above mentioned languages Lawati, Zadjali, Gujarati, Qarawi, Ahri, Habyoti, Bathari, Hikani and Harsusi can also be heard. Teaching English in such a diversified context is not a simple task. If in such a context English is presented in appropriate instructional strategies that do not give attention to the social context, diversity and students' backgrounds (Johnson and Johnson (1989) the English Language education would result in negative outcomes (Yu, 2006, Johnson and Johnson 1989; McKay, 1997). These negative outcomes may include lower educational attainment, resistance to new information, increased self-centeredness, and undesirable relationships, categorized by resentment, stereotyping, denial and prejudices (Christopher, 1993, Johnson and Johnson 1989).

This study explores how the students of Oman respond to language acquisition and how the teaching resources and teaching practices could be aligned to bring awareness of the target language culture. The learners from different communities described their learning experience only in Arabic. However, they are often taught in Arabic of other Northern Arab teachers such as Egyptians, Jordanians and the Tunisians.

Language instructors, both native speakers and non-native speakers, are employed by different universities and colleges throughout Oman. There is no standard national curriculum in Oman and therefore every teacher teaches from a syllabus followed by individual colleges. Teachers teach in different ways that might not have any relevance to the learning styles of the students and their conceptions on worthwhile learning can be different (Newton, L.1999). The choice of teachers who are familiar with the socio-cultural backgrounds and who can employ this knowledge to understand and improve students' motivational orientations is another important factor that educational authorities should consider when designing English language programmes.

Significance of the Study

As with first language acquisition, it is believed that a second language is learned through natural tendencies and through interaction with the learning environment. It is emphasized that social interaction is essential in EFL acquisition. In the present scenario, learners begin to acquire the systemic knowledge of the language and they are subjected to different structures of the target language which differ from the native language. Learning becomes interesting only when it is done in the social context and interacts with native speakers.

Language Acquisition involves communication with native speakers, involving pre-existing knowledge on different concepts. It further depends on individual differences, teaching learning styles and classroom environment. This paper presents a paradigm shift to creating a cultural texture in the classroom and bringing awareness of the target language culture. Nunan et al debates the significance of instructional technological resources to provide a natural language in context, and placement of English on the national curriculum.

Oman is compared with the region of Ontario in Canada, where learners are taught French as a second language, and consider the situation in Oman learning English as a foreign language as unrealistic. "... The students need in excess of four thousand hours of French to reach the level of proficiency needed for university study through the medium of French" (p. 3). On the other hand, the Omani students receive a maximum of 500-600 hours" (p. 3) of formal English language

learning in schools. Limited contact with the target language is reflected in the reduced chances for unaffected communication and interaction with the English language. The study aims to explore ways to create a cultural texture in the classroom to cater to the needs of the socio-cultural and psychological factors of the Omani learners.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The focus of target language learning is on the attainment of linguistic competence (Johnson and Johnson 1989), and to successfully communicate with an overall language competence that includes sociolinguistic competence like grammar, discourse and tactical competence. Hence, teaching the English language in isolation from the students' cultural, social and psychological backgrounds may make English Language learning and other academic and social skills of their EFL education (Cai, 2002: Christopher, 1993, Banks 1993) futile. The mainstream English teachers across the world teach students with no intention of bringing awareness of the target language culture to relocate to countries with English as their mother tongue.

People from different cultures think differently as Thomas (1983) points out, when it comes to speaking in English, we observe students feeling shy when speaking with other people. Research illustrates that learners with adequate language competence as well still exhibit inaccuracies when communicating with native speakers (He Ziran, 1988; Ji Peiyang, 2008). The social and cultural values play a major role on the realistic principles of the language, and these cross-cultural differences in perceiving the language have negatively affected communicative competence of the users' linguistic choices, which finally result in socio pragmatic failures. Study by Truitt (1995) demonstrates that the attitude and beliefs of student toward target language acquisition may differ on cultural factors and past experiences.

A Study by Horwitz (1988) at the University of Texas explores the beliefs of learners from different nationalities. Her learners believed that an hour a day in learning a foreign language would make one fluent within two years, while some learners believed that it would take three to five years. Horwitz (1988) research confirmed gaps between teacher and learner beliefs probably which resulted in reduced learner confidence and satisfaction with the class and an unwillingness to participate in communicative activities (p. (p. 292). She concludes by emphasizing that "Teachers will likely encounter many unanticipated beliefs; some enabling and some truly detrimental to successful language learning... foreign language teachers cannot afford to ignore those beliefs if they expect their students to be open to particular teaching methods and to receive the maximum benefit from them"(p. 293). The dual purpose of teaching English in college is not only to develop students' language proficiency but in intercultural interaction as well. English teachers should include teaching learning practices to improve students' contextual use of the target language so as to help in acquiring communicative competence. Pragmatic failure as defined by J. Thomas (1983) is "the inability to understand what is meant by what is said". He Ziran (1988) views that pragmatic incompetence refers to "failure to achieve the desired communicative effect in communication". English language learners exhibit contextual incompetence of the language though they use appropriate sentences in syntax, when they break the rules, of communal practices, or pay attention to point of time, space and receiver of the language. Thomas (1983) the integral part of target language learning is pronunciation as it has an impact on the learner's communicative ability as well as performance. Lack of appropriate communicative skills can reduce the learner's self-esteem; limit public interactions, negative estimations of a speaker's abilities and credibility.

Psychological factors such as anxiety, self-esteem, motivation, and extroversion/introversion play a major role on the speaking skill. Students believe that aspects concerning instructors, teaching practices and classroom environment are the three most demotivating factors for effective communication skills. According to the teachers' perception, the

demotivating features are related to teachers themselves, time and classroom environment.

Language acquisition entails two types of knowledge, the systemic or the learned knowledge and the schematic or acquired knowledge. In L1 learning, the child acquires the two types of knowledge simultaneously. Acquiring L2 language depends on the learners pre-existing knowledge when new knowledge is emerging. For this reason, the course book which presents the fundamentals of the foreign language culture and the essentials of language is liable to impede the natural inclination to acquire the foreign language. Therefore, the teacher in the classroom should align the two cultures and adapt such teaching materials for effective foreign language acquisition.

"Language acquisition does not require extensive use of conscious systemic knowledge which involves grammatical rules, and does not require tedious drill." Stephen Krashen. Krashen's in his theory of second language acquisition emphasizes two independent systems of second language performance: 'the acquired system' and 'the learned system'. Children learn a second language subconsciously akin to the development of first language they undergo. To acquire a second language one should communicate with native speakers of the target language.

On the other hand, learning of a second language takes place in a formal learning environment getting to know the language, and grammar rules. Krashen states that acquisition of a language is more important than learning a language. With that in mind, the point to ponder is that Omani learners are not provided with opportunities to interact with native speakers of the target language and faculty instructional practices fail to create a formal learning environment that encourages second language acquisition among students.

With regards to higher education, Gibbs (1995) emphasized variety of factors which influence student learning. For example: some students attend a course because course regulations oblige them to do so, while others do so out of interest. Some learners are inclined to seek understanding while others simply want to pass the examination. Most EFL learners adopt a surface approach to learning in which information is treated as unconnected facts (Martin and Saljo, 1976, Biggs, 1987; Entwistle and Entwistle, 2002).

In learning a foreign language things need to be said and read which have not been said or read before. Regularities and patterns in the language need to be noticed, acquired and applied to new situations. Foreign language teaching may be used to foster intercultural understanding (DFES, 2007; Conteh, 2008).

The study thus poses the following Research objectives for exploration.

Objectives of the Study

- To explore social-cultural and psychological factors that affect foreign language learning.
- To identify the negative learning outcomes in language acquisition.
- To recognize the impact of these factors on language learning.
- To explore the impact of teaching resources on target language culture.

Social Factors in Language Learning

Family background

Sami Dadi (2011) investigated the impact of social factors on language learning and he emphasized that most Omanis hate English and are not interested in learning the language, but more willing to find jobs. They have a kind of hatred to learn this language and are lazy and careless, and lack motivation to learn the language. He further added that

some living conditions don't enable people to learn English and that it depends on the character of the person, maybe he/she doesn't like learning languages, cannot understand the language because of their low learning capacity. The beliefs of the Omanis are that English is the language of Westerners.

They are not encouraged to learn the language as they don't find it useful learning it and they believe that they don't need it in their jobs. Therefore they don't want to make any effort in learning it. They can't afford to go to institutions and language schools to learn English. (Sami Dadi 2011)

The Omani learners are not good at English from the very beginning. They learn without making any practice and their time is not organized. They find it difficult to memorize some words and grammar rules. Concentration on learning and retaining information is not easy. (Sami Dadi 2011). The Omani learners believe that the teachers don't have a good teaching style and the lessons are monotonous with no innovation and games. The teacher also doesn't make the content of the lesson easy and aren't encouraging. The students hate the subject when the teacher is angry, not cheerful and doesn't express amusement with students. (Sami Dadi 2011).

Social and Cultural Influence

The Omani learners from the different regions of Oman which are distant to the cities are influenced by friends who block the way to learning. People tell them it's difficult and complicated. They are influenced by parents, grandparents outside environment and the society. (Sami Dadi 2011). They consider English a stranger to this society and believe that it is not the language of the Quran. They believe that it may destroy Arabic as they prefer preserving their language. Omanis say this is a Western language and don't want to improve their way of thinking. Some people consider it a strange language with a different culture to their society and that if they learn English they will receive the influence of the Western civilization and that the Western world is not interested in learning Arabic. They are not impressed by the behavior of English people and hold tight to their traditions and customs and tend to hate the traditions and customs of the English people.

They lack open-mindedness and aren't aware of other civilizations, and don't know enough about the language and its importance. (Sami Dadi 2011). However, with the advent of technology and the social media, awareness of the target language has long been set in and students migrating to cities are no longer strangers to the target language culture. The onus lies on the teachers to explore teaching practices to align the local culture with the target language culture for effective language acquisition.

Psychological Factors

Psychological factors such as anxiety, self-esteem, motivation, extroversion/ introversion play a major role on the speaking skill. These factors if not understood produces negative outcomes which include lower scholastic attainment, resistant to new information, increased self-centeredness, and undesirable relationship, characterized by resentment, stereotyping, dissension and prejudices. Low academic achievement often results in a diminished sense of self-efficacy, low self-confidence, and deactivated motivation and diversity in learning styles.

Learning style is defined as "The composite of characteristic cognitive, affective, and physiological factors that serve as relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment." Scheck (1983). According to Scarcella (1990) learning style is "cognitive and interactional patterns which affect the way a student identifies, retain information and feel; (p.12). In the process of teaching and learning English as a

foreign language the learners' role takes a backseat in the learning process. This is evident from the fact that the students' ways of learning English as a foreign language (henceforth EFL) are rarely, if not never, attended to by the majority of teachers at university level. In other words, university teachers do not heed the importance to establish and identify the learning styles of the learners' in spite of their awareness that there are many ways to teach as there are to learn, and that students do not all see their learning in the same way, i.e. students have very different preferences for how, when, where and how often to learn. Firstly, learning style is the way an individual acquires new information which involves cognitive skills including the affective and psychological traits of the learner. The learning style of each individual is different because it depends on their cultural background and their pre-existing knowledge. Once the learning styles are established in an individual they remain the same in any given situation.

Language acquisition involves different types of learning. Benjamin Bloom (1956) recognized three types of learning styles in classroom environment.

- Cognitive learning style
- Sensory learning style
- Affective learning style
- Personality learning style
- Psychomotor learning style

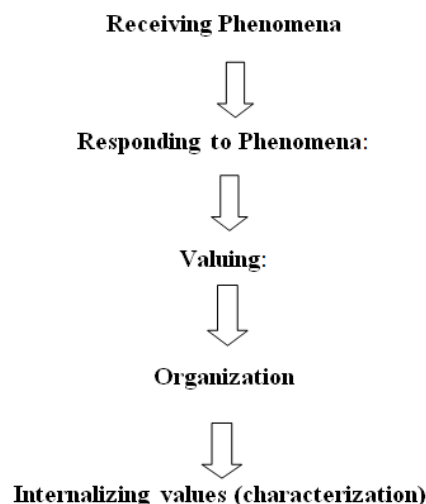
The cognitive learning style involves knowledge and the development of intellectual skills. This includes the recall or recognition of specific facts, procedural patterns, and concepts that serve in the development of intellectual abilities and skills.

AFFECTIVE DOMAIN

To attain the cognitive domain, the teachers should be aware of the socio-psychological factors which are explained by the affective domain. This domain includes emotions, feelings and one's attitude towards learning. It emphasizes ideals, admiration, passion and motivation for learning.

The factors of the affective domain explain the simplest behavior to the most intricate:

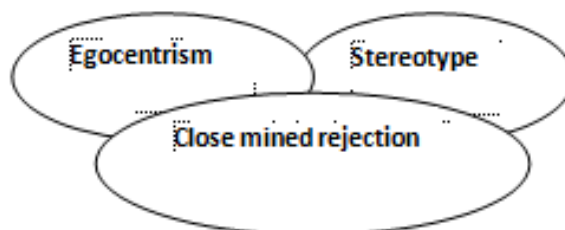
The factors of Affective Domain are



Affective Domain of SLA

The impact of the factors of the affective domain on learning is the intrinsic factors of affectivity: personality factors within a person that contribute to the success of language learning and the extrinsic factors: socio-cultural variables that emerge as the SL learner brings not just two languages into contact, but two cultures.

Personality Factors in Humans and their impact on SLA



Egocentrism

Egocentrism includes the self-esteem or ego of the learners and the inhibitions. Those with weaker self-esteem prevent communication in English due to a weak or fragile ego, which leads to lack of self-confidence in a situation or task. Self-esteem is an individual's beliefs about himself of his capabilities which enable him to succeed and be worthy.

Stereotypes

Learners form stereotypes of the instructors based on culture and language in an EFL classroom. In teaching and learning English as a Foreign Language, the learners see their instructors as members of a particular group formed on the basis of the country they belong to and the language they speak. Learners form stereotypes as they are not familiar with the culture and people from countries other than their own. Due to lack of familiarity they make a stereotype of all individuals (Hurst, 2007) in the FL classroom. They assume the behavior of the individuals in view of their own culture and shape attitudes towards them. Hofstede's (2001) form of various cultures is evident that different views on the same perception on stereotypes may lead to prejudice or intolerance to groups of people that come from diverse cultures. For this reason, the teacher's must be intermediaries between the local culture and the target language culture in the learning of English as a foreign FL and culture learning.

Close –Minded Rejection to New Information

The affective domain emphasizes the affective or temperament learning style which brings to light the terms tolerance and intolerance of ambiguity or uncertainty.

Ambiguity tolerance learners are who readily accept new or ambiguous information and are said to be open-minded or ambiguity tolerant learners. On the other hand, ambiguity intolerant learners are said to be close-minded, opposing any new and contradictory information.

When learners are ambiguity tolerant in learning they have inherent qualities that help them accept unfamiliar contexts and content of a high measure. Individuals with such a learning style are open to ideas which may oppose their opinions and points of view. On the other hand, the ambiguity intolerant individuals are not open to new information and are liable to discard content that opposes their existing thought process. These learners prefer learning in less rigid, with

no threat to their self- esteem and in more sketched learning environments.

INCORPORATING CULTURE IN THE EFL SYLLABUS

Keeping in mind the socio cultural and psychological factors and the negative outcomes mentioned above, it is essential to incorporate culture into the syllabus and explore relevant teaching practices. The EFL course books incorporate the culture of the target language to a large extent. The syllabus should thus be made as a direction to the methods of English teaching and just not to actually develop the students' ability in the language skills. To integrate culture of L1 with the target language culture, teaching English requires specific methods of cultural teaching. As in most EFL settings, the learners are trained for tests and examinations and integration of culture takes a back seat. Considering the importance of syllabus in English language teaching, integrating culture into the process must not be ignored.

Designing a Culture-Rich Learning Environment

It is a known fact that providing all EFL students with a learning environment that offers natural interaction with native English speakers is almost impossible. Therefore, it becomes the responsibility of the teachers to create a learning environment that integrates the culture of L1 with the target language.

EFL teachers can use videos, movies and role-plays to create real life situations to introduce the target language culture to learners in addition to the linguistic input. Teachers should enable their students to transfer acquired knowledge to real life situations. For example, the teacher can first show a video on different customs of the target language like "Greeting people", and then plan activities enabling students to greet each other in the target language. To ensure that students perform the activities effectively, teachers should create awareness among the students about the target language culture in advance. EFL learners are usually confused with the customary language patterns acquired in class and may not be able to transfer them to real life contexts.

For instance, EFL learners are taught to greet in the target language "Nice to meet you. ---Nice to meet you too." by the teachers in the initial stages, but the learners should know that there are different ways of greetings used by native English speakers. English teachers should inculcate pragmatic knowledge among students and to use utterances from both the language and pragmatic perspectives so as to obtain correct understanding.

Authentic Teaching Materials to Enhance Cultural Knowledge

In countries where English is learned as a foreign language, it is obvious that students do not have near enough opportunities to have direct interaction with native speakers. In such a scenario English can be acquired only when they are exposed to authentic learning materials, especially when learning English in Oman where they do not have many opportunities to have direct communication with native English speakers. So as to increase the learners' practical usage of the English language, apart from course books, authentic teaching materials like novels, magazines, newspapers, movies, English shows, short stories, poems, menu cards, ads, leaflets, brochures, tickets, TV and radio announcements and manuals could be used. Authentic materials create an awareness of the social conventions, customs, habits, of the target language culture, which helps students understand the behavior and thought process of the native speakers. This practice enables EFL learners to use English close to the native speaker in social interactions.

Instructional Practices to Align Target Language Culture with L1 Culture

It is essential for teachers teaching English as a foreign language to undergo professional development to keep

themselves abreast of new trends in teaching methodology. They also need to be totally aware of the English language culture by referring to available resources like journals, books, attending academic conferences and taking up research projects. Teachers' competence in the practical usage of the language must be enhanced as well by reading materials related to pragmatics of the language as the teachers are responsible in transferring the language and culture of the native language to the learners.

The following are different ways to effectively promoting the target language culture:

Authentic materials: Watching films, videos, the BBC news or TV shows can inculcate appropriate non-verbal communication in students like the use of appropriate space and eye contact with the audience and suitable gestures. On the other hand, reading authentic materials such as newspapers, novels, and story books with real language provides information about the values and norms of the native English speakers. These materials help students improve their listening and reading skills.

Proverbs and idioms: Proverbs and idioms are good examples which reflect the target language culture as well as are very informative about the two cultures. They appear to convey the customs, cultural beliefs, social conventions, and norms of the target language. They enable a language learner to understand some of the thoughts, emotions and views of the speakers of target language. For this reason, teachers should include idioms to have better communication strategies. They are short, funny and follow a rhyme pattern which creates an enthusiasm in learning.

Role plays: Learners can be provided with real life contexts of the target language culture to practice speaking in a natural communication. The learners should be provided with opportunities to transfer acquired skills into real world contexts.

Collection of cultural items: Learners can be assigned to collect items related to the target language culture like pictures, newspapers, magazines, story books, calendars, key chains, miniature landmarks, menu cards, songs, parts of clothing like hats, gloves, ties, stamps, currency, toys, musical instruments, travel brochures, videos and movies while practicing these speaking or writing skills in the target language. Learners can perform role plays with their classmates about an allocated item from the target language culture and transfer the knowledge acquired in real life contexts.

Native language teachers as cultural assets: Most classroom environments in the present days are mixed with learners from different cultures and ethnic groups, and in countries like Oman students have no opportunities to interact with students from target language culture. In such a scenario, native language teachers can be invited to the classroom as skilled resources to contribute to real life contexts and cultures of native speakers of the language.

Use of Tongue Twisters in Teaching English Pronunciation: The use of tongue twisters in speaking classes is interesting and fun activity which the teachers could utilize to practice pronunciation. Teachers can also choose appropriate tongue twisters to teach grammatical elements in English. There are plenty of tongue twisters that fit in to address pronunciation problems and the topic of the lesson. In the latter case, teachers can use a tongue twister to help students remember a word or phrase. Teachers should plan activities about tongue twisters to enable students understand the traditional English-speaking culture and align it with the learner's culture. Once students get more comfortable with the pronunciation they can begin to make their own tongue-twisters in the target language and display posters of them in the classroom.

Ways to Explore Target Language Culture: A classroom survey may give an insight to the learners'

interests on topics related to target language culture and design assignments as per their interests to explore the habits and customs of the native speakers of the English language. Learners may be directed to different websites to

Explore the Culture of the English Speaking Countries: The teachers can encourage learners to make posters and collages about different aspects of the English culture. These activities promote a cultural awareness and facilitate opportunities for students to develop the English language skills.

Course Books as Main source of Target Language Culture: The course book is the main source for classroom activities and they include different topics and context. Idioms and proverbs can be used to present the topics like food, health, weather to name a few. They can be also used to teach grammar items and lexis. The use of proverbs and idioms bring students closer to the target language culture and become aware of how the native speakers view the world.

The following table shows how idioms and proverbs could be aligned to the topic as given in the course book Q skills Book 3 Reading and Writing:

Table 1

Unit No.	Name of the Topic	Proverb	Idiom
1	How do you make a first good impression?	First impression is the best impression	Proof is in eating the pudding
2	What makes food taste good?	An apple a day keeps the doctor away	You are what you eat
3	What does it take to be successful?	Practice makes man perfect	Bring the house down
4	How has technology affected your life?	Necessity is the mother of invention	Man of his own invention
5	Why do people help each other?	A friend in need is a friend indeed	bosom friends
6	Does advertising help or harm us?	One look is worth a thousand words	On the bandwagon
7	Why do people take risks	Fortune favors the bold	To bell the cat
8	How can we make cities better places to live?	Good and bad make a city	When in Rome, do as the Romans
9	How can a small amount of money make a big difference?	Stealing leads to poverty	Penny wise, Pound foolish
10	Do people communicate better now than in the past?	Actions speak louder than words	Pen is mightier than the sword-

DISCUSSIONS

Finally, the study shows that aligning the learner's culture with the target language culture is essential for second language acquisition. In the absence of cultural integration, learners experience negative out comes such as becoming close-minded, rejection and egocentrism. They form stereotypes and are intolerant to groups of people that come from diverse cultures. For this reason, the teacher's should be intermediaries between the two cultures and create innovative instructional activities to align the two cultures.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper has discussed the role of the socio cultural and psychological factors and their impact on language acquisition, focusing on the role of culture in the teaching of English as a foreign language. The study began by exploring socio-cultural factors of the Omani learners and the psychological factors explained by the affective domain, which recognized the negative impact of these factors on learning English and the diversity of learners in classrooms.

It is essential for teachers to be aware of the cultural diversity among learners in classrooms and incorporate culture in the language both semantically and pragmatically. Emphasizing cultural contents and aligning the L1 culture

with the target language culture is interesting and motivating in language learning.

This study highlighted how authentic materials, idioms and proverbs which use authentic language could be used in EFL classrooms. First, teachers should innovate their teaching practices taking into consideration the learning styles of the students as well as their cultural diversity, using the course books and creating innovative teaching materials.

Finally, the learners may be motivated to respect the target language culture through appropriate instructional strategies.

This study concludes that socio-cultural and psychological factors indeed have an impact on language acquisition. The onus lies on the teachers' role in aligning the learner's culture with the target language culture appropriately, for the learner's improvement in cultural knowledge and reduced negative learning outcomes.

REFERENCES

1. Alptekin, C. (1993). Target-language culture in EFL materials. *ELT journal*, 47(2), 136-143.
2. Alptekin, C. 1981. "Socio psychological and pedagogic considerations in L2 acquisition".
3. *TESOL Quarterly* 15/3: 275-84.
4. Baker, W. (2003). Should culture be an overt component of EFL instruction outside of English speaking countries? The Thai context. *Asian EFL Journal*, 5 (4), 1-25.
5. Nunan, D. (1991). *Language teaching methodology*. London: Prentice Hall. Oxford, R. L. (1999). "Language Learning Strategies in the Context of Autonomy", Synthesis of Findings from the International Invitational Conference on Learning Strategy Research, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY.
6. Nunan, D., Tyacke, M. & Walton, D. (1987). *Philosophy and guidelines for the Omani*
7. *English language school curriculum*. Muscat, Sultanate of Oman: Ministry of Education and Youth.
8. Scarcella, R. (1990). *Teaching Language Minority Students in the Multicultural Classroom*. Englewood, New Jersey: Prentice Hall Regents.
9. Gardner, R. C., 1985. *Social Psychology and Second Language Learning: The Role of Attitude and Motivation*. Edward Arnold, London.
10. Horwitz, E. K., 1985. Using student beliefs about language learning and teaching in the foreign language methods course. *Foreign Language Annals* 18, 333±340.
11. Horwitz, E. K., 1987. Surveying student beliefs about language learning. In: Wenden, A. L., Rubin, J. (Eds.), *Learner Strategies in Language Learning*. Prentice-Hall, London, pp. 119±129.
12. Horwitz, E. K., 1988. The beliefs about language learning of beginning university foreign language students. *Modern Language Journal* 72, 283±294.
13. Horwitz, E. K., 1989. Recent research on second language learners: beliefs and anxiety. *Texas Papers in Foreign Language Education*. Special Edition 2, 283±294.
14. Truitt, S. N., 1995. *Anxiety and beliefs about language learning: a study of Korean university students learning English*. Unpublished PhD thesis, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX. *Strategies: a study of college students of English in Taiwan*. Unpublished PhD thesis, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX.
15. Nunan, D. (2002). *Second Language Teaching and learning*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.

16. Al-Mutawa, N. & Kailani, T. (1989). Methods of teaching English to Arab students. Harlow, England: Longman.
17. Schmeck, R. R. (1983). Learning styles of college students: Individual differences in Cognition. New York: Academic Press.
18. Barron, Anne. (2003). Acquisition in Interlanguage Pragmatics. Learning how to do things with words in a study abroad context. Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
19. Krashen, S. (1981) Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
20. Factors Impacting on the Motivation of Omani Students to Learn English as an L2 Sami Dadi
21. De Montfort University, 2011.
22. National Report on Quality Education in Oman –Ministry of Education 2004.
23. Paul Bonenfant and Colette Le Cour Grandmaison, "The Ibra' and Mudayrib Area," Journal of Oman Studies, Vol. 3, Part 2 (1977), pp. 91-94: and Collette Grandaison, "Spatial Organisation, Tribal Groupings and Kinship in Ibra," Journal of Oman Studies, Vol. 3, Part 2 (1977), pp. 95-106.