

"The Effect of Using Culture Awareness Strategies on Iraqi EFL College Students' Reading & Writing Performance "

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Abstract

Culture is a theory about the world, the people in it, and the ways in which goods are ought to be distributed among them. It is the complex whole that includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, laws, costumes, and any other capabilities, and habits acquired by man as a member of society. Awareness of FL culture should be viewed as an important component of learning/teaching EFL. It involves a gradually inner sense of the equality of cultures and an increased understanding of one's native and target cultures. Therefore, it is a necessity for teachers to include cultural components in the teaching of English language to maximize students' learning. Teaching culture is considered the fifth control skill in language teaching/learning. So , certain cultural awareness strategies can be effected on teaching other language skills such as reading and writing. The problem of the present study is depicted in how to teach reading texts and writing paragraph effectively through using two cultural awareness strategies; namely culture capsule and culture clusters.

Key words

Culture Capsule

الكبسولة الثقافية

Culture Clusters

التجمعات الثقافية

Culture Awareness

الأدراك الحضاري

1.1 Problem of the Study and its Significance

Understanding a language involves not only knowledge of grammar, phonology, and lexis but also certain features and characteristics of the culture. Culture is a continuous overflow of behaviours, attitudes, ethics,..etc of a group of people. To communicate internationally inevitably involves communicating intercultural as well, which probably lends to encounter factors of cultural differences. A language is, therefore, part of culture, and a culture is a part of language. The two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture (Brown, 2001:164).

Communication is seen as an application of cultural rules in oral and written practices. But the teaching of the target culture has to serve the development of cross-cultural communication. A language is learnt and used with a context, drawing from the cultural distinctive meanings and functions which must be assimilated by language learners if they are to control the language as native speakers control it. There is a close relationship between the language and the culture which is widely recognized. Communicative behaviours and cultural systems are interrelated as there is relation between the form of content of language and the beliefs, values, and needs present in the culture of its speakers (Lado, 1963:110). In real communication cultural knowledge enriches through communicative competence to understand others and to make themselves understood by others (Hymes, 1974: 269).

The use of language in general is related to social and cultural values. Therefore, language is considered to be social and cultural phenomena. Consequently, communication problems may arise among speakers who do not know or share the norms of other culture (Cakir,2006:154). To solve the communication problems in the target language in the EFL classrooms, the learners are led by the teacher to learn the target culture within the syllabus.

As a matter of fact, every culture has developed the systematic production of learners to convey their attitudes, values, thoughts,...etc and to reflect these cultural aspects on their reading and writing performance (UK-Ky,2001:1).

Culture is a theory about the world, the people in it, and the ways in which goods are ought to be distributed among them...In any academic community, each learner has a moral obligation to reflect consciously on these theories, and ethics of culture .It is a moral matter and can change the world (Gee, 1996:191).

In the college classrooms, the students have widely divergent cultural backgrounds. They vary in their cultural views about how they learn. They reflect in wide-ranging opinions about all sorts of beliefs, habits, values ,..etc as a result of their family backgrounds, their religious orientations, their ethnicities,...etc in highly diverse society (Armstrong , 2003 , 16) .

Teaching culture is considered the fifth control skill in language teaching. So certain cultural awareness strategies (e.g. cultural capsule, cultural clusters,

the self-awareness strategy, the culture-quest,...etc) can be effected on teaching reading and writing performance (Kramersch , 1993 : 1).

Students, who are in need of learning cultural awareness strategies and sensitiveness, are normally those who are least worked to achieve cultural goals. Therefore, teacher's task is to make students aware of cultural differences, not as value judgment on these differences. Learners should be exposed to these distinctions as much as possible in the FLT classrooms (Rivers, 1980:20).

Teaching reading and writing are the core skills .They allow teachers to "kill two birds with one stone."(Kinsella, 2010,37). Teaching these core skills by culture awareness strategies help learners to identify both cultures. A culture capsule is a brief description of one aspect of the target culture followed by a discussion of the contrasts between the learner's and the other cultures, whereas culture clusters combinations of conceptually related culture capsules.

The problem is depicted in how to teach reading texts and writing paragraph(s) effectively through using cultural capsule, and culture clusters.

By surveying other studies that have tackled some aspects of the problem of culture for EFL students, the researcher finds out that there are many problems related to how cultural aspects of the foreign language are taught inside classroom. Therefore, the study attempts to find out the effect of using foreign culture awareness strategies on Iraqi EFL students' reading and writing performance , and to the best of researcher's knowledge, no other studies have been tackled this problem in Iraq. Accordingly, this study is an attempt to fill the gaps with this respect.

1.2 The Aims of the study

The present study aims at finding out :

- 1- The effect of Culture Capsule Strategy on Iraqi EFL university students' reading and writing performance.
- 2- The effect of Culture Clusters Strategy on Iraqi EFL university students' reading and writing performance.

1.3 Hypotheses

It is hypothesized that:

- 1- There is no effect of using culture capsule strategy on students' reading performance.
- 2- There is no effect of using culture capsule strategy on students' writing performance.
- 3- There is no effect of using culture clusters strategy on students' reading performance.
- 4- There is no effect of using Cultural Clusters Strategy on students' writing performance.

1.4 Value

It is hoped that this study will be valuable to university students to get benefit from the proposed strategies to improve their performance in reading and writing. In addition, it may be essential for teachers of English as a foreign language and specifically to those who are concerned with teaching reading and writing at university level and who focus on cultural aspects.

1.5 Limits

The study is limited to

- 1- Teaching first- year college students at the Department of English- College of Education/Ibn Rushd-University of Baghdad, during the first semester of the academic year 2011–2012.
- 2-Two Culture Awareness Strategies; namely Cultural Capsule and Cultural Clusters are adopted in teaching the experimental groups.

1.6 Procedures

The following steps are adopted in carrying out the research:

- 1-Three groups are randomly selected to be assigned as follows:
Two experimental groups are set for the present study as the first experimental group which will be taught reading and writing by culture

capsule, the second experimental group is taught reading and writing by culture clusters, and a control group which is taught reading and writing without employing any culture awareness strategy.

2- The three groups are selected from the first year university students of the College of Education/Ibn Rushd-Department of English.

3- The groups are equalized according to several variables.

4- Pre-post tests are constructed for the sake of the experimental design. The tests include two parts: One is for testing reading comprehension, and the other is for testing paragraph writing by the testees.

5- Validity and reliability of the tests are measured.

6- An experiment for a whole semester is conducted to achieve the aims and hypotheses of the present study.

7- Results are manipulated utilizing suitable statistical tools, and

8- Conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further studies are put forward.

1.7 Plan

This thesis consists of four chapters. Chapter one is an introduction which deals with the problem and its significance, aims, hypotheses, values , limits, procedures, plan and definition of basic terms. Chapter two is the theoretical background concerning the notion of teaching foreign culture awareness strategies, reading, writing, and related previous studies. Chapter three involves the procedures followed in attaining the aims of this study in addition to the methodology of the experimental work. Finally, chapter four is concerned with the computation and discussion of results, conclusions, pedagogical recommendations and suggestions for further research.

2.0 An Introductory Note

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part includes the theoretical background of teaching culture. An overview of some previous studies will be presented in the second part.

2.1 Theoretical Background

This part is divided into six subparts. The first includes cultural conceptions. The second is dealing with teaching culture. The third is an overview of defining a cultural syllabus. The fourth focuses on the ways of teaching culture. The fifth clarifies the strategies of teaching culture awareness and teaching cultural models. And the final part is devoted to cultural strategies on reading and writing performance.

2.1.1 The Entrance to Culture

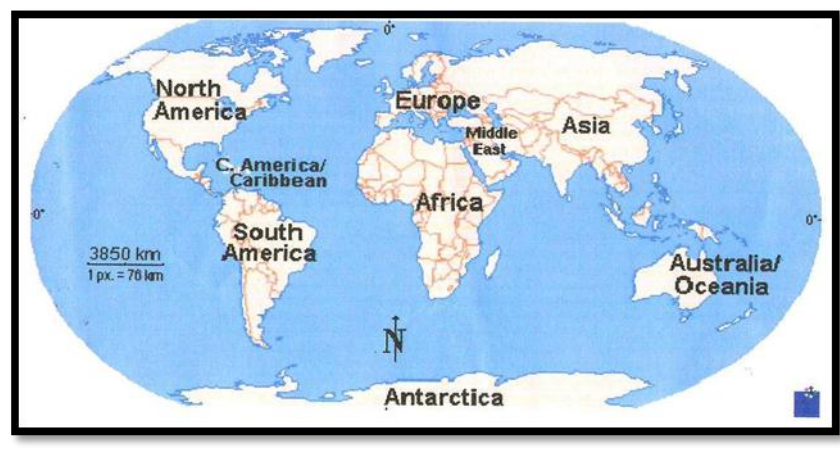


Fig 2-1 Culture around the World (Abisamra , 2009 : 2)

Many attempts have been made to define culture, yet these attempts simply go beyond mounting the words and understanding what is written on a page . Thus the term culture is used for more than one sense (Geertz , 1973 : 17) .This section is to provide some definitions of culture postulated by the most prominent figures in the field of ELT.

Culture has been argued as the systematic patterns of habits, behaviours, traditions,...that share members of a group to continue living (Parson , 1953 : 18).

Further, culture refers to the context. It is the way of thinking, feeling, and living. It relates to all beings. It is the "print" or "glue" that binds a group of people together. It is the content of message to be communicated among members of society (Brown, 2000: 176).

The increased focus of culture on human life makes authors define it as the way of expressing human behaviours, i.e., how people behave. It controls behaviours of a family to be sensitive and to aware what others expect them. Thus, culture helps people aware how far they can go as individuals and what responsibility towards the group is (ibid: 177).

In addition, culture can be understood as the text of our lives, the ultimately coherent pattern of beliefs, acts, responses, and artifacts that human comprehend and produce every day. Coherence, system, and order are highlighting of what constitutes a text. Culture as a text means it is not nature, it is made by people in history for conscious or even unconscious reasons, the product of all they think and do. Even the unconscious or semiconscious acts of our daily lives can be understood as sets of coherent acts and be seen to interact with each other. These acts, beliefs, and practices, along with the artifacts they produce music we listen, the clothes we wear, the television we love, the films we watch,.... have meaning (Kolker, 2006:171-172) .

Culture can be estimated as all the accepted and patterned ways of behaviour of given people. It is the facet of human life learned by people as a result of belonging to some particular group. It is that part of learned behaviour shared with others. Not only this concept includes a group's way of thinking, feeling, and acting but also the internalized patterns for doing certain things in certain ways. It is human social legacy (Montgomery and Reid-Thomas, 1994:5).

Anthropologists' viewpoints of culture are as the total life way of living people (Chastain, 1988:302). They clarify that culture is language and language is culture. In order to speak language well, one has to think of it as a powerful product because language is the soul of the country and people who communicate it(Tang, 1999:101).

Language reflects culture of a group. There is a symbolic picture between them. Language is the mother and culture is the daughter, i.e., there is an interrelatedness between the two. Language fosters a kind of culture of a particular group. Also, language and culture make a living organism. Without culture, language will be died (Seelye, 1988: 4) .

Culture shapes human thoughts, actions, and often does so with a heavy hand. It has several meanings; two are of major importance to teachers:

- ' **little-c** ' **culture**: Culture as everything in human life (culture BBV: Beliefs, Behaviours, and Values).

- ' **Big – C** ' **culture**: The best in human life restricted to the elitists (culture MLA: Great Music, Literature, and Art of the country), (Brooks, 1968:21) .

In brief, culture is not an expendable fifth skill, so to speak, to the teaching of language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). It is always in the background, right from day one, ready to unsettle the good language learners when they expect it least, making evident the limitations of their hard-won communicative competence, challenging their ability to make sense of the world around them (Kramsch 1993:1).

Tylor's definition of culture is considered as the model definition. Culture is as the complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society (Tylor, 1871:1) .

From an intellectual viewpoint, culture defines as the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of the one group or category of people from another (Hofstede, 1997:5) .

Elliot (1975: 303) states that: The country which receives culture from abroad without having anything to give in return, and the country which aims to impose its culture on another, without accepting anything in return, will both suffer from this lack of reciprocity.

2.1.2 The History of Teaching Culture

The history of culture in the foreign language classroom has been the concern of many teachers, scholars, and sparked considerable controversy. Up to now, two main perspectives have influenced the teaching of culture. One pertains to the transmission of factual, cultural information and other aspects of the target civilization, highbrow information, i.e., immersion in literature and the arts, and lowbrow information, which may focus on the customs, habits, and folklore of everyday life. This preoccupation with facts, though, leaves much to be desired as far as an understanding of foreign attitudes and values is concerned, and virtually blindfolds learners to the minute albeit significant aspects of their own as well as the target group's identity (Kramsch, 1993:24).

The other perspective has been to embed culture within an interpretive framework and establish connections, namely, points of reference or departure, between one's own and the target country. This approach can only furnish learners with cultural knowledge, while leaving them to their own devices to integrate that knowledge with the assumptions, beliefs, and mindsets obtaining in their society (ibid : 25). Thus , culture considers mere book knowledge learned by rote (Huebener: 1959:177).

In the past, people learned a foreign language to study its literature, and this was the main medium of culture. 'It was through reading that students learned of the civilization associated with the target language' (Flewelling, 1993:339)

In the 1960s and 1970s , such eminent scholars as Hall (1959) , Nostrand (1974),

Seelye (1974, 1984) , and Brooks (1975) made an endeavour to base foreign language learning on a universal ground of cultural needs so that the foreign culture (would appear) less threatening and more accessible to the language learner (Kramsch , 1993: 224) .

In the heyday of the audio-lingual era in language teaching, Brooks (1968 :66) emphasized the importance of culture not for the study of literature but for language learning, as Steele has observed. Earlier on, Brooks (1960) in his seminal work "Language and Language Learning" had offered sixty-four topics regarding culture interspersed with questions. Also, he emphasized such aspects of culture as greetings, personal possessions, cosmetics, tobacco and smoking, cafes, restaurants, contrasts in town and country life, patterns of politeness, daily life,... (Steele, 1989:155) .

Byram (1994 : 23) makes learners aware that culture resides in the very fabric of their lives-their beliefs, assumptions, and attitudes-than in a preoccupation with aesthetic reflections .

2.1.3 Cultural Dimensions

Culture is seen as a dynamic system of symbols and meanings related to dimensions (Robinson, 1988: 11) .

Adaskou et al . , (1990:3-4) outline four cultural dimensions. The first is their aesthetic dimension. It includes cinema, literature, music, and media. The

second is their sociological one. It refers to the organization and nature of family, interpersonal relations, customs, material conditions, and so on. The third is their semantic dimension. It encompasses the whole conceptualization system which conditions, perceptions and thought processes. The final dimension is their pragmatic or sociolinguistic one. It contains the background knowledge, social , paralinguistic skills, and language teaching code which are necessary for successful communication.

Cultural dimension , according to Galisson (1991 : 119) focuses on the field of semantics . He is more oriented towards the study of culture in relation to lexicography. He believes that culture is contained in the vocabulary of a language.

Another viewpoint, Halliday and Hasan (1985:4) described “Language as social practice is a clear indication of the link between language and culture” . For them, language use is essentially cultural identity. It is a mode of social action . They view culture as the total set of meanings available to a community which they refer to as the semiotic or the system of meanings.

From an anthropological viewpoint, Greet Hofstede (1986 : 136) who is elaborated four different dimensions to study the cultural norms of fifty different countries:

Individualism as a dimension of culture opposes collectivism; Individualist cultures assume that any person looks primarily after his / her own interest and the interest of his/her immediate family (husband, wife and children) (ibid).

Collectivist cultures assume that any person through birth and possible later events belongs to one or more tight “in-groups” from which he/she cannot detach him/herself. The “in-group” (whether extended family, or organization) protects the interest of its members, but in turn expects their permanent loyalty. A collectivist society is tightly integrated; an individualist society is loosely integrated (ibid).

Power Distance as a dimension of culture defines the extent to which less powerful persons in a society accept inequality in power and consider it as normal. Inequality exists within any culture, but the degree of it varies between one culture and another. All societies are unequal, but some are more unequal than others (ibid) .

Uncertainty avoidance as a dimension of culture defines the extent to which people within a culture are made nervous by situations they perceive as unstructured, unclear, or unpredictable situations which they therefore try to avoid by maintaining strict codes of behaviour and belief in absolute truths. Cultures with a strong uncertainty avoidance are active, aggressive, emotional, security-seeking, and intolerant. Cultures with a weak uncertainty avoidance are contemplative, less aggressive, relaxed, accepting of personal risks, and relatively tolerant (ibid).

Masculinity as a dimension of culture opposes femininity. The two differ in the social roles associated with the biological fact of the existence of two sexes, and in particular in the social roles attributed to men. The cultures as "masculine" strive for maximal distinction between what men are expected to do and what women are expected to do. They expect men to be assertive, ambitious and competitive, to strive for material success, and to respect whatever is big , strong , and fast . They expect women to serve and to care the non – material quality of life, for children, and for the weak. Feminine cultures, on the other hand, define relatively overlapping social roles for the sexes, in which men need not be ambitious or competitive, but may go for a different quality of life than material success. Men may respect whatever is small, weak, and slow. So, in masculine cultures these organizational values stress material success and assertiveness. In feminine cultures they stress other types of quality of life, interpersonal relationships, and concern for the weak (ibid).

2. 1.4 The Visible and the Invisible Aspects of Culture

In L2 teaching, the term culture has been employed to refer to distinctly different aspects of people's lives. It can be used to refer to the literature, arts, architecture, and the history of a particular people. EFL teachers describe the history or geography aspect of their country because these represent a popular understanding of the term culture (Murcia, 2001:444).

In addition, some definitions of culture can include style of dress, cuisine, customs, festivals, and other traditions. These aspects can be considered the visible culture (ibid).

Yet another far more complex meaning of culture refers to the sociocultural norms, world-views, beliefs, assumptions, and value systems that find their way into practically all facets of language use, including the classroom, and language teaching. The term *invisible culture* applies to sociocultural beliefs and assumptions that most people are not even aware of and thus cannot examine intellectually. For example, in the classroom, the roles of the student and the teacher are defined by the socio cultural values of the larger community and the society. If students believe that the teacher is responsible for explaining the material and that speaking up in class is considered rude, presumptuous, and selfish, the fact that the teacher simply instructs students to participate in discussion may do little to change learners' notions of what is appropriate and how they may be viewed by others if they actually speak in class. Most teachers, even those with minimal classroom experience or exposure, know how difficult it can be to convince some students to speak in front of their classmates, whereas other students may appear to have trouble allowing classmates an opportunity to have their turn. This aspect of culture can be seen as an iceberg with the tip sticking above the water level of conscious awareness. By far the most significant part, however, is unconscious or below the water level of awareness and includes values, thoughts, and patterns (Weaver, 1993:157).

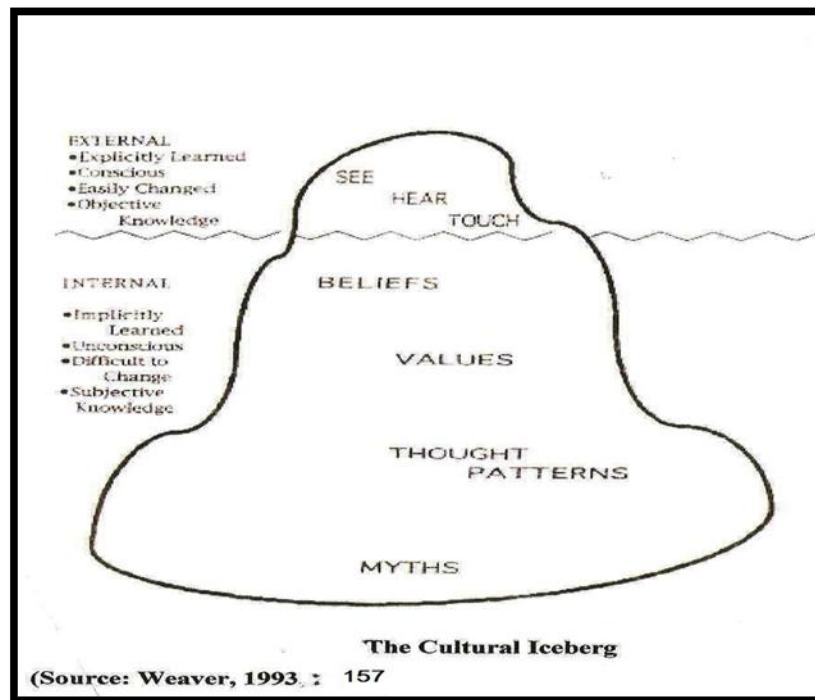


Fig. 2-2 The Cultural iceberg (Weaver 1993:157)

Further, there is a contribution to an American sociologist, Seymour Lipset concerning cultural aspects. He points to a number of aspects that differentiates Iraqis from Americans. The one to which he is devoted most of his discussion concerns the contrast between “collectivity–orientation” and “self–orientation”.

3.0 An Introductory Note

This chapter presents all the procedures followed to achieve the aims and to verify the hypotheses of the study. It covers the experimental design, population and sample selection procedure, equivalence of the samples, the post test description, the experimental procedures, and the statistical tools.

3.1 The Experimental Design

The experimental design represents "the plan according to which experimental groups are selected and experimental treatments are administered and their effect is measured"(Good, 1974:74).

In fact, the experimental design refers to the selection of a particular design that is based on the purpose of the experiment, the type of variables to be manipulated, and the conditions of limiting factors under which it is conducted (ibid).

Further, the experimental design represents the strategy which is set by the researcher to collect the necessary information and to carried out the suitable analysis to test the hypotheses of the research within a comprehensive plan. The researcher should choose the suitable experimental design which provides valid conclusions about the relationships between both independent and dependent variables (Brown and Rodgers, 2002:210).

However, there are two identifying and distinguishing characteristics of a true experimental design. The first is the randomization, which indicates that:

- 1- a sample of subjects is randomly selected from a certain population, and
- 2- the individuals in this random sample are also randomly

assigned to two or more groups the individuals are made for comparison. The main aim of randomization is to control and equalize any difference among individuals in the selected groups that may be effective performance on the post test. The second trait is related to the experimental intervention or treatment. The various groups subjects are exposed to different treatments or sets of circumstances, as part of the experiment. (Bachman, 1995:266).

In order to attain the goal of the present study, the randomized design, pre test and post test are utilized (Isaac and Michael, 1977:43). Consequently, the three groups of the first-year college students of the Department of English, college of Education/Ibn Rushd-University of Baghdad are chosen to be the sample of the study .

It is an important fact to select "an experimental design" that is suitable for testing the deduced consequences of the researcher's hypotheses (Van Dalen, 1962:230). To provide a clear picture of the experimental design, consider table 3-1

Table (3-1): The Experimental Design

Group	Pre test	Treatment	Post test
EXP.₁	T₁	Culture Capsule(C Cap.)	T₂

EXP.2	T₁	Culture Clusters (C Clus.)	T₂
CG.	T₁	Traditional Technique	T₂

3.2 Population and Sample Selection

The population of the study involves all first year college students at the departments of English, colleges of Education/Ibn Rushd, Arts, Languages, and Education for Women at the University of Baghdad during the academic year 2011-2012.

The total number of the 1st year students' population is (345) of both sexes distributed into the four colleges (see Table3-2) .

Table (3-2): Total Population

Name of the college	1st
Education- Ibn Rushd	100
Arts	54
Languages	141
Education for Women	50
Total	345

The sample of the study consists of 100 students in three sections of the college of Education /Ibn Rushd-Department of English. They are randomly selected. They are: section A to represent the control group which is taught reading and writing according to the traditional technique set by their prescribed textbook, section B to stand for the first experimental group which is taught reading and writing by the strategy of c cap, and section C to represent the second experimental group which is taught reading and writing by the strategy of c clus . The distribution of subjects can be clearly shown in Table (3-3):

Table (3-3): The Study Sample

Group	Section	No of Subject
CG.	A	34
EXP. ₁	B	33
Exp. ₂	C	33
Total		100

3.3 Equalization

Certain variables which may cause a variance in the tested testees' performance should be taken into account and then equalized. These variables include age and parents' level of education which indirectly play an effective role and make a difference in the students' performance in reading and writing (Goodman,1976: 366) .

Practically, the three groups are equalized according to the following: gender variable, the academic level of the mother variable, the academic level of the father variable, age variable, baccalaureate degree variable, and the testees' level on the pre test.

3.3.1 Gender Variable

By applying the Chi-square formula, it is found out that there is no statistically significant difference among the three groups since the computed X^2 value which is 4.309 is lower than the tabulated X^2 value which is 5.99 at 2 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance (see Table 3-4) .

Table (3-4): The X^2 Statistics of the Equalization of the Three Groups in the Gender Variable

Group	No.	Male	Female	Computed X^2 - Value	Tabulated X^2 - V	d.f	Level of Significance
Exp.1	33	15	18	4.309	5.99	2	0.05
Exp.2	33	11	23				
CG.	34	19	14				

Total	100	45	50				
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3.3.2 The Academic Level of the Mother Variable

By also applying the Chi-square formula, it is found out that there is no statistically significant difference among the three groups in the academic level of the mother variable since the computed X^2 value which is 9.783 is lower than the tabulated X^2 value which is 12.59 at 6 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance (see Table 3-5)

Table (3-5): The X^2 Statistics of the Equalization of the Three Groups in the Academic Level of the Mother Variable

Group	No.	Illiterate+ reads and Writes+ primary	Institute+ college+ Higher Studies	Computed X^2 value	Tabulated X^2 value	d.f	Level of Significance
Exp.1	33	23	10	9.783	12.59	6	0.05
Exp.2	33	24	9				
CG.	34	26	8				
Total	100	73	27				

3.3.3 The Academic Level of the Father Variable

There is no significant difference among the three groups in the academic level of the father's variable since the computed X^2 value which is 4.116 is found to be lower than the tabulated X^2 value which is 12.59 at 6 degree of freedom and a level of significance of 0.05 (see Table 3-6).

Table (3-6): The x^2 Statistics of the Equalization of the three Groups in Academic Level of Father Variable

Group	No.	Illiterate+ reads and Writes+ primary	Intermediate Secondary	Institute+ college+ Higher Studies	Computed X ² value	Tabulated X ² value	d.f	Level of Significance
Exp.1	33	3	14	16	4.116	12.59	6	0.05
Exp.2	33	9	12	12				
CG.	34	5	14	15				
Total	100	17	40	43				

3.3.3 Age Variable

By applying ANOVA, it is found out that the computed F-ratio is 1.933 which is lower than the tabulated F-ratio which 3.0718 at the two degrees of freedom 2 and 97 and a level of significance of 0.05. Therefore, there is no statistically significant difference among the three groups in the age variable (see Table 3-7).

Table (3-7):The ANOVA Statistics of Equalization among the Three Groups in the Age Variable

Variance	Sum of squares	Mean square	Computed F-ratio	Tabulated F-ratio	d.f.	Levels of significance
Between Groups	3094.681	1547.340	1.933	3.0718	2	0.05
Within Group	77654.759	800.565			97	
Total	80749.440					

3.3.4 Baccalaureate DEGREE Variable

By applying ANOVA, it is found out that the computed F-ratio is 0.189 which is lower than the tabulated F-ratio which is 3.0718 at the two degrees of freedom 2 and 97 and a level of significance of 0.05. Therefore, there is no statistically significant difference among the three groups in the bacculaureate variable (see Table 3-8):

Table (3-8): The ANOVA Statistics in the statistics of Equalization among the three Groups in the bacculaureate Variable

Variance	Sum of squares	Mean square	Computed F-ratio	Tabulated F-ratio	d.f.	Levels of significance
Between Groups	23.294	11.647	0.189	3.0718	2	0.05
Within Group	5964.896	61.494			97	
Total	5988.190	72				

3.3.5 Pre test Variable

In order to achieve the aims of the study, a pre test has been used. The pre test is conducted to ensure the equalization of the three groups involved in the study (see Table 3.3) and the post test to evaluate the effectiveness of the experimental procedure for the same three groups. Then, these groups are taught reading and writing performance by the researcher herself from November 1, 2011 to January 31, 2012.

In addition, the aim of examining these groups' performance is to detect the effect of exploiting the dependent variable (CA) on the two independent variables (Reading and Writing). These steps should be taken into consideration in order to equalize certain variables affecting students' performance.

The pre test involves a passage entitled *Christmas* taken from Alexander (1967) book entitled “*Developing Skills*”, followed by two questions. The first question is concerned with the choice of the suitable answer of the ten MCI. Each student has to choose one suitable answer (see Appendix 2). The second question is dealing with paragraph writing. It is divided into seven components (see Table3-12). The total mark of question one is 20, where two marks are assigned to any correct item and zero for any false one. Concerning question two, there are seven components. They are :

1- content: it includes thesis of statement, development, description, and consistent,

2-organization: it includes introduction, sequence, conclusion, and length,

3- discourse: it includes topic sentence, unity, marker, cohesion, and fluency

4- syntax

5- vocabulary

6- mechanics: it includes neatness, punctuation, and spelling, and

7- culture spot

Scores are distributed among these seven components (see Table 3-12).

Face validity of the pre test is achieved by exposing it to a number of jurors (see Table 3-13). The agreement percentage of the suitability of the test items is 100%. As far as reliability is concerned, the Alpha-Cronbach formula is applied where it is found out to be 0.978, and by the Split-half method, where the reliability coefficient is found out to be 0.978 before correction, and 0.989 after correction .

By applying ANOVA, it is found out that the computed F-ratio is 2.908 which is lower than the tabulated F-ratio, with the two degrees of freedom of (2and97) and a level of significance of 0.05. Therefore, there is no statistically significant difference among the three groups in the pretest variable (see Table 3.9) .

Table (3-9): The ANOVA Statistics of the Equalization among the Three-Groups in the pre test Variable

Variance	Sum of squares	Mean square	Computed F-ratio	Tabulated F-ratio	d.f.	Levels of significance
Between Groups	8.315	4.158	2.908		2 97	0.05
Within Group	138.675	1.430				
Total	146.990					

4.0 An Introductory Note

This chapter deals with the presentation of the results analysis obtained from the students' responses to the post test . A distinction is followed with the aim of providing solid justification that can verify the hypotheses stated at the beginning of this study. In accordance with the results obtained, a number of conclusions, pedagogical recommendations, and suggestions for further research are put forward.

4.1 Results

In order to verify the null hypotheses which state that there are no statistically significant differences among the control group, first experimental group, and second experimental one, in their mean scores in R and W, mean scores as well as standard deviations are calculated for the three groups as shown in Table (4-1).

Table (4-1): The Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of the Three Groups in Reading comprehension

Group	N	Mean	S.D
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CG	34	10.7059	3.14815
EXP 1	33	12.9697	2.65147
EXP 2	33	11.3333	3.02765
Total	100	11.6600	3.07555

Table(4-2): The Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of Three Groups in Writing

Group		N	Mean	S.D
Content	CG.	34	1.3529	0.59708
	EXP ₁	33	1.7273	0.67420
	EXP ₂	33	1.7576	0.83030
Organization	CG	34	1.4412	0.89413
	EXP ₁	33	1.6970	0.88335
	EXP ₂	33	1.6667	0.88976
Discourse	CG.	34	1.9706	1.52723
	EXP ₁	33	2.1818	1.37964
	EXP ₂	33	1.9394	1.49874
Syntax	CG.	34	0.2647	0.44781
	EXP ₁	33	0.3333	0.47871
	EXP ₂	33	0.4848	0.50752
Vocabulary	CG.	34	0.2647	0.447781
	EXP ₁	33	0.3333	0.47871
	EXP ₂	33	0.3300	0.49620
Mechanics	CG.	34	0.6471	1.17763
	EXP ₁	33	0.3636	0.89506
	EXP ₂	33	0.5800	1.23168
Culture	CG.	34	0.1471	0.35949
	EXP ₁	33	0.1818	0.39167
	EXP ₂	33	0.1818	0.39167

To find out the significance of the differences among the mean scores of the three groups in reading Table(4-1) and writing Table(4-2), ANOVA is used where the result is shown in Table(4-3) for reading, and Table(4-4) for writing.

Table (4-3): ANOVA for finding out the significance of difference among the mean scores Reading comprehension

Source of Variance	Sum of squares	Mean square	Computed F- ratio	Tabulated F- ratio	d.f	Level of Significance
Between Groups	91.078	45.539	5.225	3.0718	2 97	0.05
Within Groups	845.362	8.715				
Total						

Table (4-3) reveals that the computed F-ratio which is 5.225 is higher than the tabulated F-ratio which is 3.0718 at a level of significance of 0.05 and two degrees of freedom of 2 and 97. This shows that there is a statistically significant difference among the three groups in reading comprehension in favour of the first experimental group which is taught by the culture capsule.

Table (4-4): ANOVA for finding out the significance of difference among the mean scores in Writing

Source of Variance		Sum of squares	Mean square	Computed F- ratio	Tabulated F- ratio	d.f	Level of Significance
Content	Between	3.419	1.710	3.428	3.0718	2	0.05
	Within	48.371	0.499				

	Total	51.790				97	
Organization	Between	1.315	0.657	0.831			
	Within	76.685	0.791				
	Total	78.000					
Discourse	Between	1.152	0.576	0.266			
	Within	209.758	2.162				
	Total	210.910					
Syntax	Between	0.847	0.423	1.850			
	Within	22.193	0.229				
	Total	23.040					
Vocabulary	Between	0.080	0.140	0.623			
	Within	21.830	0.225				
	Total	22.110					
Mechanics	Between	8.315	4.158	2.908			
	Within	138.675	1.430				
	Total	146.990					
Culture	Between	0.027	0.014	0.093			
	Within	14.083	0.145				
	Total	14.110					

Table (4-4) shows the following:

- 1- The computed F-ratio which is 3.428 is higher than the tabulated F- ratio which is 3.0718 at a level of significance of 0.05 and two degrees of freedom of 2 and 97 . This shows that there is a statistically significant difference among the three groups in content in favour of the second experimental group.
- 2- The computed F-ratios (0.831 for organization, 0.266 for discourse, 1.850 for syntax, 0.623 for vocabulary, 2.908 for mechanics, and 0.093 for culture) are lower than the tabulated F-ratio which is 3.0718. This shows that there is no statistically significant difference among the three groups in these aspects.

In order to identify the source of difference among the three groups, Scheffé test is applied for past comparisons and the results are shown in Table (4-5) for Reading comprehension and Table (4-6) for paragraph writing.

Table (4-5) Scheffé Values for the Comparison among the three Groups in Reading comprehension

Group	A	B	C
CG (A)	.....	.....	.....
EXP ₁ (B)	2.2638*	.....	.....
EXP ₂ (C)	0.6275	1.6364	.....

*Scheffé critical value for the comparison between A and B is 1.778 which means that there is a statistically significant difference in favour of the first experimental group in RC.

Table (4-6) Scheffé Values for the Comparison among the Three Groups (Writing)

Group	A	B	C
CG (A)	.....	.....	.....
EXP ₁ (B)	0.3743	.....	.....
EXP ₂ (C)	0.40	0.0303	.....

Scheffé critical value for the comparison between A and C is 0.40 which means that there is a statistically significant difference in favor of the EXP₂ group in paragraph writing.

4.1.2 Discussion of the Results

It is apparent that all the findings drawn in the previous studies (introduced in chapter 2) show that the used techniques and strategies (culture capsule, clusters, assimilators, cultoons,etc.) reveal certain effectiveness on teaching reading and writing on the development of students' abilities in reading and writing. Likewise, this study, is intended to reflect the effectiveness of applying the two teaching strategies (C Cap and C Clus) on students' performance in reading and writing. The main aim is to find out the effectiveness of these two cultural strategies on Iraqi EFL university students' reading and writing performance.

The results of the post test reveal that both teachers and students consider the teaching of culture is important. Teachers of foreign language have become increasingly aware that "it is better to learn or teach a foreign culture addressing the culture of the community in which it is used" as Hinkel (1992:2) believes .

A major problem concerning the teaching of culture seems to be finding time to do it. Ideally, as stressed by several scholars(see for example Chastain, 1988:288,Tomalin and Stenmpleski, 1993:8), culture should be an integral part of every language class. One of the main reasons why there is not enough time for integrating culture into foreign classes may be that the teachers mostly concentrate on developing the four language skills, or rather the skills that are assessed at the examinations.

The inclusion of culture-related strategies in the examination may give weight to teaching culture in language classes .

Some teachers believe that culture should better be taught on a separate course. However, considering how much language and culture are interwoven, it seems practically impossible to give culture-free language lessons.

Teachers must be aware of cultural strategies (for example, capsule, cultures, quizzes, assimilators, cultoons,...) and how to apply them inside classroom.

Teachers integrate teaching culture from time to time into their classes. This is also proved by the test results which varied a great deal from class to class.

Given the reality of the present situation where the teachers are often made responsible for the students' examination results, it is understandable that the main focus remains on developing the four language skills.

An expected result reveals no significant differences among groups. Reading and written tests give a good insight into the everyday life of the other culture and they do not take too much class time.

Further, the teachers can rely on the students' interest and ask them to do some research into the area of culture. So, student research is a powerful tool as it combines students' interests with classroom activities.

Cultural strategies are seen as a logical bridge between understanding and writing the other culture . They are essential activities for promoting and generating ideas that lead to successive comprehension .

Increasingly, Chastain(1988:316) maintains that "one of the major problems in teaching culture is how to device ways of presenting culture in such a manner that students can comprehend and relate to the information". The results of the post test reveal that this may also be a problem in Iraq. Although all teachers agree that teaching culture is important, and include cultural techniques and strategies in their lessons using various material, but the way of teaching culture to students is problematic (see 2.1.18) .

Valette (1986:182) maintains that together with making progress in foreign language, students also increase their awareness of the culture of the country whose language is being learnt. This will broaden awareness by including such aspects of culture as the way of life, historical events,...etc. These ,in sum, constitute the general background of members of the target culture. Students who share this knowledge demonstrate an increased awareness of the parameters of that target culture.

The analysis of the previous studies reveals that the scope of socio-cultural elements in teaching culture is important.

Concerning the present study, the analysis of the post test result leads to the findings that using cultural strategies in teaching students' reading and writing performance are of great importance. Since students' reading comprehension is improved by using one culture awareness strategy; namely culture

capsule, and their paragraph writing is also improved by using culture clusters strategy, c cap and c clus raise students' performance through teaching R and W. It is necessary for EFL college teachers to consider the importance of improving their students' reading comprehension and paragraph writing is their advanced responsibility .

Here, one has to agree with Byram who claims that when assessing cultural knowledge , there is an alternative to “evaluate courses rather than individuals” (Byram and Morgan, 1994:138).

The results of the post test have two constituents:

- 1- Recognition skills which can be achieved through the reading test, and
- 2- Production skills which can be achieved through the written test.

Concerning the first aim, It is found out that the scores of the (EXP_1) were high. That means they recognize culture spot successfully. Their results are acceptable. While the same group in writing, is weak. EXP_1 cannot achieve elements of producing language successfully. This group cannot function the written components as content, organization, discourse, syntax, vocabulary,...etc to produce language successfully, and this affected students' results.

Concerning the second aim, it is found out that the scores of the (EXP_2) were high in production in terms of the content aspect only. While the scores of the (EXP_2) were weak in recognition skills

The final result is that the EXP_1 is good in recognition skills rather than the production ones. While the EXP_2 is of an acceptable level in content of writing component rather than other components .

4.2 Conclusions

In the ideal foreign language classroom, the teaching of culture should be an integral and systemic component. However, as culture has been defined differently in different periods, this has led to different views of what constitutes culture teaching. Until the early twentieth century, when culture was viewed as consisting of literature and fine arts, the main aim of foreign language teaching was to enable learners to read literature written in it. Together with the growth of social sciences, culture started to be seen as a whole way of life.

Today, there exists a widespread consensus among scholars (Kramsch, 1993, Byram, 1989, Seelye, 1993, Chastain, 1988,.... etc) that language and culture should not be treated as separate entities and culture should be integrated into the language classroom.

In order to teach culture systematically, teachers should set clear and achievable goals. They need to decide on appropriate methodology. Strategies and techniques should foster students' cultural knowledge and awareness. The choice of a suitable strategy also depends on what the aim of teaching culture is. The culture capsule and culture clusters can be used for providing cultural knowledge to developing language skills (reading and writing) and thinking at the level of analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

As the teaching of culture mostly takes place in a language class, teachers need organized and systematic texts to the teaching of culture. In order to find out to what extent culture- related material is present in books and how it is organized, researchers can use several teaching devices strategies and techniques .

It is concluded that the results of the present study are due to the following reasons:

- 1- Teaching cultural strategies motivate students to work cooperatively and enthusiastically in activities related to reading and writing skills.
- 2- Teaching cultural strategies give the students the opportunity to develop both oral and written production.
- 3- Mastering the target culture will draw a picture on what are in students' mind about the target world as if they are living in .
- 4- Achieving fluency and accuracy of the target culture can be carried out through teaching cultural strategies.
- 5- Adopting such cultural strategies will encourage autonomous learning among the students, i.e., adopting inductive strategy of learning through reading and writing performance.
- 6- Teaching culture strategies in language classes will give weight to culture-related strategies in examination.

4.3 Pedagogical Recommendations

In the light of the results of the present study, the following recommendations are proposed:

- 1- Teachers have to allocate much time and give more emphasis on best ways of teaching cultural strategies in class.
- 2- Department of English in Iraqi colleges are invited to adopt and develop modern techniques in teaching reading, writing, and other language skills necessarily integrated with culture and communication.
- 3- Familiarity with cultural knowledge will encourage students to be better reader and writer. That will increase their cultural creativity in reading and writing.
- 4- Culture capsule and clusters promote other beneficial and joyful teaching/learning strategies, and make students equal and cooperative partners in class.
- 5- Teachers should always be enthusiastic as they are considered the main sources of ideas for developing language culture skills in relation to R and W.
- 6- Students must be aware of the cultural strategies they utilize, and they should utilize them flexibly and efficiently.
- 7- Teachers make good use of textbook illustrations and photos. Use questions to help students describe and analyze the cultural significance of photos and realia .
- 8- Use the target language whenever possible to teach cultural content.

4.4 Suggestions for Further Studies

Based on the present study findings and conclusions, further studies are suggested to be conducted :

- 1- A study can be administered to investigate the effectiveness of using culture awareness strategies on college students' performance in listening and speaking.
- 2- A study can be conducted to investigate the effect of culture awareness strategies on students' learning needs, motivation, and attitude toward language.
- 3- A study is recommended on examining the effect of cultural awareness on the students' four language skills in different academic stages: primary, intermediate, preparatory, and college.

4- A study is recommended to explore the effect of the use of the intercultural approach on increasing students' cultural awareness of the target culture.

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(أثر استخدام استراتيجيات الإدراك الحضاري لدى طلبة الجامعة العراقيين الدارسين للغه
الانكليزية لغة اجنبية في القراءه والكتابة)

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الملخص

الثقافة هي النظرية حول العالم والناس واساليب توزيع خبراته عليهم . انها الكل المعقد والتي تشمل المعرفة والمعتقدات والفن والاخلاق والقوانين والعادات واية امكانيات وعادات يكتسبها الانسان كونه احد اعضاء المجتمع . ان ادراك ثقافة اللغة الاجنبية ينبغي ان يُنظر لها كمكون مهم في عملية تعليم / تعلم اللغة الانكليزية بوصفها لغة اجنبية وتتضمن الثقافة فهم داخلي وتدرجي للمساواة بين الثقافات ، ومنهن متزايد لثقافة الفرد الام والثقافات المعنية الاخرى . لذا فمن الضروري بالنسبة للمدرسين ان يُضمنوا مكونات الثقافة في تدريسهم للغة الانكليزية لتوسيع تعلم المتعلمين . ان تدريس الثقافة يعتبر المهارة الخامسة ذات السيطرة في تعليم / تعلم اللغة. لذا فإنه يمكن لاستراتيجيات الادراك الثقافي ان تؤثر في تدريس مهارات اللغة الاخرى كالقراءة والكتابة . ان مشكلة الدراسة الحالية تكمن في كيفية تدريس النصوص القرائية وكتابة الفقرة بشكل فعال من خلال استخدام استراتيجيات الادراك الثقافي وخصوصاً الكبسولات الثقافية والتجمعات الثقافية .