MATERIALS FOR TEACHING CULTURE: REALIA, FILMS, SIGNS

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Abstract

The term "culture" is broad and includes many different things, such as traditions, ideals, and artifacts. Using tangible and visual resources that depict various cultural features, such as realia, films, and signage, is one of the greatest ways to teach culture. Clothing, food, and crafts are examples of real-world items that individuals utilize on a regular basis. Films, on the other hand, provide learners with direct access to many cultures through visual depictions of those cultures. Posters, billboards, and other visual signs convey cultural messages and advance intercultural harmony. These resources can offer beneficial chances for students to interact with culture in an immersive manner when teaching about it, allowing them to develop a deeper knowledge.

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To engage students and aid them in understanding the subtleties of the culture you are teaching, it is crucial to employ a range of teaching tools when teaching culture. You can utilize the following materials, as examples:

1. Realia: Realia is the use of actual items or materials to illustrate cultural activities or beliefs. As an illustration, you may bring in traditional attire, cuisine, or artifacts from the culture you are educating your students about. This gives pupils a practical opportunity to engage with the culture.

2. Movies: Movies are a terrific approach to expose students to various cultures. You can show documentaries that look at the history and customs of the culture you are talking about or movies that are based in that culture. This helps pupils understand the culture and the people and places they are studying about.

3. Use signs to teach kids about a culture's language and customs. Signs are a visual representation of language. You can demonstrate symbols from the target culture and describe their meanings and contexts. This aids pupils in comprehending community expectations and cultural norms.

In order to give our pupils stimulation and practice, we as general or academic English teachers use a variety of media and study a wide range of topics. However, few

tools are as accessible and appealing to everyone as movies. It is conceivably the most engaging and approachable media we can utilize with kids to encourage substantive debate and discussion in the classroom. Additionally, it generates a vast range of related reading materials, from the irresistibly scannable BFI and IMDB websites to newspaper stories and reviews, academic journal or book treatises, and gives nearly realistic audio content.

Language instruction has always included implicit exploration of a linguistic community's culture and society, and film provides a wealth of intriguing viewpoints on individuals, historical events, and geographic locations. Film conversation also differs from most of the relatively idealized discourse found in textbooks in that it frequently reflects the whole range of social and regional linguistic variance.

How therefore can we make the most of this rich medium? This article explores two approaches to incorporating cinema into language courses at Oxford Brookes University and the University of Manchester. The strategies and exercises we created were created to fulfill the goals of the specific courses in question, but they could be simply modified for use in a variety of language courses.

You can also incorporate music, books, artwork, and even online resources like news articles and social media. Use a range of resources to keep students interested and give them a comprehensive understanding of the culture you are talking about.

However, there are some important considerations when using realia, films, and signs as teaching materials. Teachers should carefully select materials that are age-appropriate, culturally-sensitive, and relevant to the subject matter. In addition, teachers should create activities and discussions that promote active and critical thinking, as well as involve students in deeper learning experiences beyond memorization or observation. They should also ensure that the materials address the diverse cultural backgrounds of their students and provide insights into different cultural perspectives.

In using realia, films, and signs, teachers can provide a more comprehensive and engaging way of teaching culture to their students. By adding different elements of visual, auditory, and hands-on learning experiences, students can immerse themselves in the culture and language more fully, and strengthen their motivation to learn. Thus, realia, films, and signs play an essential role in enhancing students' intercultural communicative competence, their understanding, and appreciation of diverse cultures, and their ability to communicate more effectively with people of different cultural backgrounds.

Conclusion

In conclusion, using realia, films, and signs are great materials for teaching culture as they provide a variety of learning experiences to students. Realia adds authenticity and depth to language learning, making cultural immersion more vivid and effective.

It also offers a realistic glimpse into the people's lives, history, traditions, and values. Meanwhile, films can help students understand the cultural context of certain themes, events, or issues. It offers a visual medium that helps learners connect with the culture and society being depicted, and it provides them with potential role models to emulate or aspire to be. Lastly, signs can play an important role in language learning and understanding of cultural context through visual cues and specific imagery. They provide a practical way of teaching students how to navigate the culture, and what's expected of them in different social and cultural settings.

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