

Cultural issues in esl

Sociology, Communication



Cultural Issues in ESL One main issue with English being a second language is cultural differences. It brings great distress to most international students who are studying abroad because though they strive to learn with a higher level of excellence and performance, their cultures will always find a way to limit that ambition. It's hard to be in a classroom with students who do not understand the culture from whence you came. It is also hard to understand your fellow classmates and teachers for they have their own cultures, some of which we might find very different. English is harder to learn when you are placed in that situation, for it is hard to get used to the culture at the same feeling the pressure of studies and socialization. The people in this category are mainly international or exchange students. Given the privilege to study abroad for a better education, these students are hard working and efficient. But the disadvantages are inevitable. There are cultures in their former school that their current school does not practice. Proper behavior, salutations, programs, and methods vary in different schools. Even in local schools, it is hard for some to practice English, because majority of the students' families could possibly not have the complete knowledge of English, thus speaking incorrect grammar to their children, giving them a confusing perception in English. When materials in class are passed in English, those students who are used to different materials in their past schools have great difficulty in studying, thus making them seem stupid or lazy. In reality, they are just not used to this kind of culture and way of studying. The cultures in Asia are different from those in Europe and America. Culture is a beautiful thing when you see different ones all around the world, but in terms of English being a culture's second language, it is

pretty complicated to attain and retain. The religions, cultural backgrounds, and language barriers each have its own way of communicating in the local land but unfortunately English is still a major problem in most countries when these cultural differences are shared. As it was studied, there has been a vast improvement though in some countries in Asia such as Singapore, the Philippines, and Malaysia. Not everyone has learned all there is to know, but English is already taken as a second language, next to the other dialects. Many students find it laborious when studying in a different school or when interacting with foreign students. When there are groupings or projects in school, it is very hard to communicate. Communication is very important, but the very source of the miscommunication is the language itself and the culture that is keeping the students from interacting with each other. They cannot express their thoughts as much as they can, which the result of their lack of culture link. There is a friction in most international schools if the students are not informed well enough. The differences are very easy to see. From the way they talk to the way they act, foreign students are distinct. You can see the stress in them as they try to communicate if they aren't used to speaking straight English. Students who are of a different language mustn't be deemed as a weaker or more advanced student in the classroom. Equality must be present at all times. If it isn't practiced, it will lead to biases and favoritism, misunderstandings and miscommunication across the classroom. It is very uncomfortable for a non-English speaking student to ask for help from the teacher as they will be criticized for their actions, when in actuality, they have no other intention but to get the work done. The local students may feel unimportant to the teacher if such help is given to the foreign

student, so teachers must be very careful and sensitive to equivalence. If I were to become the teacher of a school, whether it may be an international or local school, I must be the example of a nondiscriminatory standard. Dealing with students is a huge responsibility so we must be mindful of the issues that may be happening in our schools today. There are numerous non-English speakers who are determined to try their best at learning English yet we still do not take them seriously. It would be so much easier for the local students to interact with the international students if we ourselves encouraged fellowship between the races. We should avoid conflicts that would offend any of them and continue to appreciate each culture. Although some may have religions that the other students do not approve of, we must respect each religion even if we do not agree with the teachings. And if we share the same belief with a student, we must not be biased with the student. Whatever the differences may be, racism is a meaningless and prideful thing to do. The fact that these international students want to learn English is an honor already. They have a respect for it and want to communicate with it to those who speak English and teach it to those who can't. Everyday is a challenge to them as they continue to learn the art of English. But why can't we use the disadvantages for good? Why do we discriminate? English is the easiest to learn yet we still have issues with it being a second language. It is challenging for foreigners to communicate in English, but without challenge we will not learn to work hard for a great benefit. Wouldn't it be a wonderful thing for other countries to communicate and to share friendships? If only every one of us spoke English as their second language. But unfortunately, there are people who disagree with the

idea. Although patriotism is good, there must be peace with other nations and cultures. English did not even start in America. It was developed using different languages. It is a testimony to the idea of unity with different nations. Great things can be accomplished when we accept and learn from issues such as English being a second language. English as a second language would be easier to adapt to if every culture had an effort to introduce it to their people. As English speakers, we must put value in the language we have attained and put it to good use. So many people all around the world have the desire to learn this language and so we shouldn't make it an issue. It is a good problem. As long as there are learners, we must be willing to teach. And if we accomplish that, English would be universal and our nations would be united even in language.