

Exploring the Effect of Learning a Foreign Language on our Eastern Culture

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Abstract

The present study aims at approaching a compromise to settle the debate relevant to teaching foreign languages in general and English language in specific for young children in the countries in which Islam is the official religion. This requires an objective that helps in finding out such a compromise and a solution to preserve Islamic Culture and national identity together with learning foreign languages that belong to a foreign culture. The problem lies in the process of transplanting foreign cultures to our Eastern culture which may have negative effects on future generations. In other words, some people teach their kids foreign languages accompanied with its foreign culture that is contradicting with ours which may replace our Islamic culture one day. This objective requires the activity of analyzing the elements of **national identity** to find out which one is strong and cannot be affected by external cultural elements, and which one is vulnerable, weak and easily affected passively . Hence, we can diagnose the reasons that may contribute in constituting such a generation that misses true feelings of identity and try to avoid them. On the other hand, the present paper is an attempt to extract the elements that enriches foreign language learning without passive effects on national identity. Hence , this study approaches the clashing points of view as well as approaching the ideal methods of dealing with foreign identity in a way that does not affect national identity. This in turn requires suggesting translation methods

and procedures helpful in adapting curriculums to match the requirements of national identity. Hence, this contributes in helping instructors and textbook designers to create safe and smooth learning for our kids. This requires applying the skopostheorie which is a purpose-based translation theory which depends on submitting a target text (TT) that is appropriate to its addressees.

Key words: foreign language – culture – Eastern – Islamic-national identity- skopostheorie

1.Introduction:

The present study is an attempt to highlight the importance of learning a foreign Language together with approaching an attempt to safely avoid the negative effects of importing undesired elements of foreign cultures that may replace other elements in our Eastern culture. The concern relevant to acquisition of a foreign culture made some communities in the past decide to postpone foreign language learning for their kids because of its expected negative effects on national identity and culture. The aim of the present study, hence, is to mitigate such concern by suggesting approaches to teach a foreign language safely in an Eastern community. Because we cannot neglect learning foreign languages, it is useful to start by clarifying the real reasons which made learning foreign languages a prerequisite these days. This, in turn, explains why English language became an international language as it is used as a means for communication among different communities. Globalization then made studying English as a foreign language a prerequisite for our students. Cook (2008:1-3) states the importance of language in general that it is a means for constituting both our social and individual identities. The importance of language lies in its importance in achieving essential goals in life such as social, educational, religious as well as business and career. He adds that it also helps us to remember the past and plan for our future. Language helps us also to communicate and exchange ideas and points of view as well.

On the other hand, learning a foreign language may also be useful to achieve similar objectives in other communities. Therefore, learning English as a foreign language benefits in communication and exchanging ideas with other people in other communities. For (Cook, 2008), learning another language may mean: getting a job; a chance to get educated;

the ability to take a fuller part in the life of one's own country or the opportunity to emigrate to another. Such rare chances may not be available without learning a second language as he called, which we will call a foreign language. Learning a foreign language may also be useful as an expansion of one's literary and cultural horizons when he reads the great works of literature composed by famous authors and scholars of the foreign language. Another benefit of learning a foreign language lies in the expression of one's political opinions and religious beliefs. This can be accomplished by using the foreign language in order to declare or publish a specific thought, points of view or one's ideology relevant to the politics of his native community.

Learning a foreign language to serve Islam on the other hand constitutes a valuable aim also in trying to spread Islam by means of an international language such as English. This may benefit in helping many people from other communities who speak different languages to embrace Islam, since we can communicate with them only by means of English as a lingua franca. We can hence find that (Cook,2008) believes that "helping people to acquire second languages more effectively is an important task for the twenty-first century because a second language affects people's careers and possible futures, their lives and their identities" (ibid.).He considered the concept second language applicable to learning any language apart from the native language. For example, one may study or acquire a second, a third, a fourth or any number of languages and hence all of them are considered in the status of second language.

Hence, we approach the perspective which sees learning English language as a foreign language (EFL) a way to enhance our link to our Islamic and Arabic identity and not the reverse. Out of this very perspective, we expect such a valuable benefit to Islam from learning English and not the reverse. At least, it will help us to be acknowledged with the West's point of view of Islam and Arabs. Moreover, we may

be able to submit appropriate replies, in English or in any foreign language we master, against any negative ideas about Islam. This will, in turn, let the West be acknowledged with our Islamic and Arabic identity by transferring our thought to them by means of English Language. Learning a foreign language hence amounts to being a prerequisite to fulfill such noble aims.

Teaching English for children in Egypt as an Arab Muslim country as well as in other Islamic countries such as Saudi Arabia was a matter of debate years ago and its teaching began only in preparatory schools at the age of 12. Although this point of view has already changed now and foreign languages are being taught now in primary schools, some parents are still full of concern relevant to learning a foreign language for their young children. Their concern is based mainly on the possibility of foreign culture negative or undesired effects. In that they agree with such team of educators who think that it is not recommended to teach English or foreign languages in general to young children because this may have a negative effect on our Eastern and Islamic identity, which may in turn result in undesired social effects in the future. However, the novelty of the present study lies in its being against such deeply rooted beliefs, which shaped our orientations towards English as a foreign language as well as foreign languages. Moreover, we can reply to such assumptions that our children are now surrounded with other circumstances which may have worse effects for the future of the whole community more than merely learning a foreign language (i.e. Satellite channels, open access to the internet and smart cell phones with fast internet access...etc.). Such cell phones became like toys in the hands of young children in primary schools and even younger. Unlimited access to the internet via cell phones may constitute a source of concern which threatens the future of our children, especially with lack of control and censorship on the data received.

This indicates that learning English as well as any foreign language should not always be considered the only source of concern or threat for our national identity. However, teaching foreign languages are better recommended for academic reasons as well as for social reasons to understand everything around us directly from the source without translation. Therefore, it is important to mitigate such concern by trying to find out appropriate solutions to mitigate such concern . This concern can be dissipated if understood from social, Psychological or linguistic perspectives . Hence, we need to modify negative point of view of some parents towards teaching young children foreign languages especially by means of trying to design it safely in accordance with Islam and our inherited social traditions. One more reason which may be logical for the importance of teaching English as a foreign language earlier is its being in some situations “the only language that can be used almost anywhere on the globe between people who are non-native speakers” (ibid.) which refers to using English as a lingua franca for communication to facilitate business and educations and any other purposes.

Research Question:

The present research is designed to answer the following questions :

- Does learning a foreign language for young children cause changes in their identity?
- Can we teach our kids a foreign language without exposing them to passive elements of foreign cultures?
- What are the elements of a national identity? Which component can be affected passively by a foreign culture and which cannot?
- Can we protect our kids from passive effects of foreign cultures from the beginning?
- Are translation theories helpful in this mission?

The present research attempts to submit satisfying replies to such inquiries in order to mitigate the concern of some

parents towards learning a foreign language as well as to protect a whole generation from the undesired passive effects of foreign cultures.

2. Perspectives to approach identity

2.1. Social perspective

2.1.1. The elements of national identity of a community

It is important to understand the elements of a national identity in general which are applicable for both Arab and foreign countries. According to (Clark, 1990; Huntington, 1997), national identity has relatively unique elements which sets culture apart and enables it to exist. Such unique elements differ from a community into another and it distinguishes the behaviour of a certain group of people who belong to a certain community from another group of people who belong to another community. If we apply that to compare Islamic and western identities, the difference will be clear because the elements of a western culture are completely different from the elements of Islamic culture. This constitutes one of the basic reasons behind concern relevant to teaching English language to young children; the fear originates from the probability of transferring certain non-preferred elements from the elements of western community to Muslim children in our community especially in childhood.

Smith (1991:14), states that national identity has distinguished features which can be summarized as follow: "1. an historic territory, or homeland 2. Common myths and historical memories 3. A common, mass public culture 4. Common legal rights and duties for all members 5. a common economy with territorial mobility for members." . National identity was also defined by Keillor et al (1996: 58) and Keillor and Hult (1999: 67) as a "set of meanings owned by a given culture that sets it apart from other cultures." . Further it was considered by Keillor et al(1999: 67) as "a 'sense' of culture" . Keillor et al. (1996) also defined national identity as "set of meanings owned by a given culture that sets it apart from other

cultures", which is like the preceding definition.

Considering these definitions of national identity, we can look at the national identity out of the definition of the two elements of the very expression national identity, which is nation plus identity. First, a nation is defined according to Oxford dictionary (1933:30) as "An extensive aggregate of persons, so closely associated with each other by common descent, language, or history, as to form a distinct race or people, usually organized as a separate political state and occupying a definite territory." As well as the definition of a nation, it is useful also to recognize the definition of nationalism according to Oxford dictionary (1933:31) as "A form of socialism, based on the nationalizing of a country". Smith (1991:71) states that nationalism "invents nations where they do not exist". This relates nationalism to a psychological point of view which is useful to an individual and his relationship with the community in which he lives. According to Bloom (1990:59) "it actually benefits the individual, in terms of psychological security, to make identification with the nation." Identity then can be defined according to Olson (2002) as having certain distinctive attributes which "make you unique as an individual and different from others"

2.1.2.The elements of Islamic identity are different from Western identity's

We can, therefore, say that national identity for any country worldwide basically includes each of the following three elements; Religion, language and culture, represented in social traditions, in addition to other elements. We have already selected such three elements for their being essential for national identity for any community as well as to our study relevant to English language as a component of other community's national identity. Therefore, it is clear now the reason for which there is a common concern relevant to teaching English language. Because English language belongs to a foreign community with a different culture which is different from ours, we may have the concern that

any elements of such culture may be transferred to our children especially if English is taught to them in young age. Such concern is logical because western culture may be acquired by our children with its undesired effects. This, in turn, may exacerbate in the future. However, if we scrutinize such issue carefully, we can find out that English as a foreign language, belonging to a foreign culture of a different community with a different national identity, constitutes only a fragment from such foreign culture. The rest of them are; Religion and social traditions.

In fact, teaching foreign languages to children is more effective in young age because, children can acquire and master languages better than an adults. Therefore, we should do our best to plan our teaching against the concern relevant to the acquiring the undesired elements of foreign culture for the children in the future. This can be achieved by extracting the elements of the Western identity and adapting the learning environment to our Islamic culture and to the eastern community requirements. In other words, we can deal with English language or any other foreign languages only by extracting it and bringing it to our Islamic environment without any undesired elements of the foreign culture. Thus, we should focus on teaching English language only and exclude elements relevant to the foreign undesired culture. This requires a great effort to save our national identity together with teaching our children foreign languages. However, this aim requires specific teaching strategies and curriculum designing and a clear understanding from the psychological, social and linguistic perspectives.

2.2.From the psychological perspective:

In this perspective, applying the idea of SCHEMA may be a good solution for the problem. SCHEMA, the plural of schemata, first introduced by Piaget (1926), as a cognitive development for children that takes place in stages. It can be useful in this respect to explain another side of the concern and negative orientation relevant to teaching English in

childhood. Achieving such goal may lead to a balanced solution for such issue. Schema is defined on <http://ibpsychologynotes.wordpress.com/> as “cognitive structured (mental templates or frames) that represent a person’s knowledge about objects, people or situations” . It deserves mentioning that schema is used to “to organize our knowledge, to assist recall, to guide our behavior, to predict likely happenings, and to help us make sense of current experiences” (ibid.). Schema is simplify reality and it is also claimed that “Schemas are assumed to operate in a “top-down” way to help us interpret the “bottom-up” flood of information reaching our senses” because they came originally come from our past experiences and knowledge.

Schema is also defined on http://sites.wiki.ubc.ca/etec510/Schema_Theory#Definition as “an abstract structure of knowledge, a mental representation stored in memory upon which all information processing depends”. It was also defined simply in a similar meaning on <http://www.alleydog.com/cognotes/schemas.html> as the “generalized knowledge about situations and events” and it is described also as “a guide to our recognition and understanding of new information by providing expectations about what should occur” (ibid.). Schema also may represent knowledge at different levels, e.g. cultural truths, linguistic knowledge or ideologies. Schema also is said to be such mental templates that represent a person’s knowledge about people, situations or objects, and which originate from prior knowledge or experiences.

On the other hand, schema was defined as a negative belief acquired in a certain situation. According to David C. Bricker & Jeffrey E. Young on as “an extremely stable, enduring negative pattern that develops during childhood or adolescence” and it is also believed that such schema is “elaborated throughout an individual’s life” (ibid.) and the important point about schema is that “we view the world through our schemas”. It is acceptable then that “Schemas are

important beliefs and feelings about oneself and the environment which the individual accepts without question” (ibid.). But the problem arises for negative schemas when they occur in a special background in certain circumstances. This may end in composing faulty schemas, which may regard for only a side of the situation apart from the whole.

A simple example about the possibility of this typical change or the modification of a schema in children can be given to approach this idea; a child may have a schema in mind about anything that is round that it is the ball with which he plays every day. Therefore, if he sees a watermelon, a cantaloupe or any round fruit, he will say that this is a ball and he may start playing with it, according to the schemata in his mind about any round object until he receives any modification to such schemata that a watermelon may be round. Then he starts to make new schemata about the new object with its new characteristics which distinguishes it from any similar object.

Schema is closely related to the elements of national identity. Schema encompasses beliefs relevant to our culture, language or religion. Those three elements inevitably constitute our personalities and common social attitudes which distinguish our society from other western societies and our schema as well. Such schema consists of cognitive units we acquire unconsciously through generations. I.e. our identity includes Islam, Arabic language and eastern culture. Similarly, the identity of any western society includes also the same three elements but in a different kind of elements; Christianity, English (or European languages) and western culture. The origin of such concern relevant to teaching Saudi children English language therefore arises from the possibility of acquiring such western culture as mentioned above. But if we could manage it and exclude only the very (English) language out of the other western identity elements, it would be a good achievement. It would also be more successful if we could achieve a degree of reconciliation

between English language and our national identity and the schema relevant to it, represented in Islamic culture in specific.

Putting all the previous definitions in consideration and applying the concept of schema, we can say that some Arab Muslims, might have composed a typical faulty schema about English language because of the cultural circumstances surrounding English language, especially when such schema are proved to be “self -perpetuating, and are very resistant to change” (ibid.). If those who have the faulty schema about learning a foreign language consider that they have gained such faulty schema abo because of relating learning English as a foreign language to its source culture a long time ago through generations, then they may be able to explain the reason behind such concern. The source of this concern originates from a desire to preserve our national identity from any external elements which may spoil it.

We can, therefore, suggest a treatment to fix such deeply rooted schemas relevant to such foreign language belonging to an undesired identity. This can be fulfilled by modifying such schemas about teaching English to children in specific. However, such schemas are deeply rooted and they are strongly biased to protecting our children from foreign cultures to maintain their high Islamic teachings and enhance our national identity. On the other hand, we should be more flexible towards the issue of English as a foreign language only for the global importance of English. In other words, we should look at English from the perspective of its global importance in isolation of its original culture. This requires applying certain modifications on these deeply rooted schemas. Such modification may be performed successfully if they are performed carefully by designing teaching methods and textbooks for foreign languages without exposing them to the negative elements belonging to the foreign culture.

If we succeed in modifying schemata on the situation of teaching English language, we may be capable of solving the problem and the debate relevant to the clash between teaching English to children and national Islamic identity. We need such modification to apply teaching foreign languages for kids safely. This helps us to cope with the changing world around us and to pace its urgent requirements. English is now used as a global language to relate a vast number of countries in business, culture and politics. We should not wait for the movement of translation to let us know what is going on in the world. We need to teach our children English language to prolong the duration of time in which they study English. This will enable them to master English language and use it smoothly in the future for researching and discovery and as well as to read and understand directly from source references. Consequently, this will be reflected positively on our community in all domains in the future.

2.3.From the linguistic perspective

It is very important to consider some important linguistic concepts in order to evaluate the outcomes of learning English in our Islamic and Arabic community. Such deep understanding contributes in distinguishing some linguistic concepts, which may be confusing for many people. This may help in correcting misunderstanding relevant to our orientation towards teaching English language for children. We should think about answering questions such as ; what is the difference between foreign language and second language? What is the difference between language learning and language acquisition? What is the difference between competence and performance? And to ask if there is any clash between first language acquisition and second language learning.

2.3.1. The difference between a foreign language and a second language

Many people may assume that second language is the same as a foreign language in order to simplify the issue of language learning. However similar they may seem, there is a slight difference between them. (Cook, 2008), in the comparison he held between them “a second language is for immediate use within the same country; a foreign language is for long-term future use in other language”. Therefore, learning a second language may not be a matter of choice for the nationals of a specific society because of its vital use in the society for communication when the country includes other nationalities. On the other hand, a person may decide to learn a foreign language for a benefit in the future or for a career. (Halliday, 1975), cited in (Cook, 1998) who distinguished between learning a first language as “learning how to mean” (ibid.) which is relevant to acquiring the methods that make a person capable of expressing what he feels in order to communicate with others. People who decide to learn a foreign language or a second language on the other hand “already know how to mean” (ibid.). This is a very important point in distinguishing between acquiring first language and learning second language.

A foreign language then is the language which is to be studied in educational institutions only and not to be used in communication in society. Therefore, we can say that English is taught in Egypt as a foreign language and not used in communication as a second language. The use of English in Egypt then is limited to some textbooks in limited hours per week in schools or Universities. There is no clash then between learning English as a foreign language and acquiring and learning our mother tongue, Arabic language. Hence, there will not be any probable interference between our mother tongue, Arabic and learning a foreign language.

2.3.2.The difference between language acquisition and language learning

In order to differentiate between English as a foreign language and English as a second language in a more extensive way, we should distinguish between language learning and language acquisition. I.e. language acquisition is relevant only to our mother tongue, Arabic language in Egypt and all Arab countries. Infants learn a native language unconsciously and store its sounds and meanings in the lexicon in the mind since birth time until the time they will be able to speak when their vocal organs become mature. Language learning on the other hand is a completely different story. It deals with exposing our children to a formal setting of learning, i.e. in schools in order to learn a foreign language. We should then pay attention to the fact that children are to be admitted to schools around the age of six years old in which they can master their mother tongue, Arabic. Therefore, there may not be any concern towards the issue of the probable interference between English, as a foreign language and our native language, Arabic language.

Educators distinguished between language learning and language acquisition. Language acquisition as mentioned above is relevant to native language while language learning is relevant to a foreign language. Second language also can be acquired in certain societies side by side with the native language. In other words, the nationals in certain countries are to be bilinguals if they acquire two languages at the same time, one of them is the native language and the other is the second language. Second language also is being learned in schools later exactly like the native language, apart from acquiring this language in childhood. For example, in Canada, there are two official languages; Canadians can speak both English and French. Both languages are to be taught in schools officially at school age. In Egypt, Arabic as well as in any Arab country is taught officially at educational institutions although it is our mother tongue. In fact, they

learn reading and writing Arabic. On the other hand, they acquire Arabic by means of listening and speaking skills.

At that point, we may be approaching a very important resolution for the confusion between a foreign language and a second language. A foreign language is clarified above as the language we may teach to our children in formal institutions at a certain age. In addition, we do not use it at home or in streets among the members of our community. A second language has a different story. It occupies a different status in the society comparable to native language. A second language is used in a certain society side by side to the mother tongue. A child acquires it exactly like his mother tongue by means of listening and speaking. He masters it unconsciously since early childhood. Mastering a second language does not require attending classes in schools .i.e. Canadians speak English as their mother tongue but they can master French also as a second language. Therefore, we can conclude that teaching English for small children who can master their native language, Arabic, will never constitute any matter of concern if this is the case. A foreign language will be learned and not to be acquired or put in a competition with the native language.

Krashen (1981:40) claimed that many studies relevant to teaching second language agree upon the presence of two linguistic environments for teaching a second language; one of them is the formal or artificial environment, which is found in the classroom and the other is informal or natural, which is found in the community for communication purposes. (Krashen and Seliger :1975) noted that the language learning environment in adults is distinguished by certain characteristics. These characteristics are summarized in rule isolation (i.e. using activities in which linguistic rules are presented) and feedback (i.e. error correction). This is different from the acquisition environment for young children. This means that language learning takes place on the conscious level while language acquisition takes place on

the unconscious level. This assures the conclusion of lack of interference between a native language and a foreign language.

2.3.3. The difference between competence and performance

It is also important in the current study to distinguish competence and performance. It helps those who study language to distinguish between casual errors of language learners and errors resulting from lack of knowledge about this language. In order to give a clearer approach such distinction between competence and performance, it is better to understand the meaning of the concepts in general. In http://wiki.answers.com/Q/Language_and_performance , competence is defined generally as the “ability to do something, or knowledge about something, to a certain required or acceptable standard” and performance as “actually doing something, i.e. using one's ability or knowledge to do something”. Hence language competence can be defined as “the ability or knowledge to do something by using language”. For example, we use language to speak, write, read what others have written or to listen and understand the speech of others.

Chomsky (1965) defined competence as “the knowledge you (subconsciously) possess about how to speak a language” and performance as “the real-world linguistic output”. It is logical then to say that performance can reflect competence effectively. On the other hand, performance of any speaker of a language may contain linguistic errors in grammar or pronunciation. This may take place even for native speakers. These errors may be casual and as a result of slips of the tongue or generalization of rules to irregular cases. For example, an English speaker in the middle of his speech may say comed instead of came or childs instead of children, and so on.

We can benefit from the distinction between these concepts in class by focusing on both of them in certain

situations we find appropriate in class. For example, we put all our emphasis on enriching the competence of English language learners. Then we test their performance in the very knowledge we added to their competence. For example, we can teach our students the rules of plural and tenses and then we test them in written and oral performance for this new knowledge added to their competence. We acknowledge the way they use their knowledge (competence) about the language in application (performance). We can also have higher level of expectation of the learners' performance according to their competence, the knowledge we taught them about the language.

It is useful then in our teaching English classes in Egypt to apply a kind of balance between competence and performance. The teacher should teach grammar and vocabulary for example and then try to find out their reflection in the performance. This means that theory (i.e. competence) is not enough in teaching English language. Practice (i.e. performance) is also important to teach the foreign language in a complementary way. Performance can also be more important in certain linguistic situations such as speaking and conversation because it reflects a considerable level of competence.

2.3.4. Concerns relevant to English language and linguistic imperialism

In Collins advanced English dictionary imperialism is defined as “a system in which a rich and powerful country controls other countries or a desire for control over other countries”, which is a general definition for the concept. In this sense, linguistic imperialism then can be understood as the control of English language speaking countries on the other countries out of the methods of teaching English as a foreign or second language in these countries. Such control, from the linguistic side, may also go beyond the methods of English teaching. It can amount to political and commercial

dominance as well. (Robert Phillipson:1992) called this 'linguistic imperialism' (Caltung:1980), cited in (Cook:2008), added that the relationship between the country which owns the language and the other countries which use this language 'a dominant center' by which he means the powerful western countries and 'dominated periphery' by which he means the under-developed countries. In this type of relationships, the dominant country forces the periphery countries to use its first language for business purposes. It is clear then that this seems a form of political dominance because "language is not politically neutral" (ibid.) . It deserves mentioning that UK affords a lot of money for teaching English in the form of English course books or scholarships for studying in English in the UK.

However, our main area of concentration in what is meant by linguistic dominance lies in the control on the methods of teaching English as a foreign or second language from the side of the native speaker. At this point we can ask a very important question; Does English language in a certain Arabic country such as Egypt may amount to the level of imperialism such as the dominated countries?. To answer such a question, we should determine the reasons for which English language is taught in Egypt sometimes "as a legacy of colonialism, the original speakers of an international language feel that they have the right to say what it should be or how it should be taught"(ibid.). Some countries prefer teaching foreign languages to their people by native speakers only. For example "the Alliance Francaise in London claiming French taught by French nationals only; the Eurolingua Institute, lessons are given by experienced and fully qualified mother tongue teachers...etc." (ibid.).

It is appropriate in Egypt for example to benefit from native speakers in teaching English as a foreign language. They contribute in giving Egyptian students a real experience and correct pronunciation for English for being their mother tongue. On the other hand, teaching English in a specific

country does not always mean dominance. Each country should determine its nationals' prerequisites. In Egypt, for example, only Egyptians can decide what is required for Egyptians' education whether in or outside Egypt. We can benefit from other countries who determine the purpose of learning a foreign language in their country. For example, the Chinese experience of learning English in China is represented by a Chinese spokesman who said that "For China we need a Chinese method" (ibid.). Therefore, each country can decide and select what is appropriate and useful for its nationals. We can apply the same way for Egypt (i.e. the importance of learning a foreign language because of scientific research and original education) putting in mind that such political or commercial dominance do not constitute a concern. (Cook: 2008) adds that 'setting aside political or commercial motivations, the responsibility of international languages has passed out of the hands of the original owners" (ibid.). This means that the language will be used for its benefit as an international language for interaction between countries for definite purposes determined by such countries. Then he adds that "the right to say how something should be taught is even less a right of the native speaker than the right to say how something should be said" (ibid.).

If we consider this fact, we will feel free to design the curriculum that suits our culture according to our prerequisites since we are free from both political and commercial dominance. Moreover, some countries which are dominated by a dominant center, the dominated periphery which are obliged to use English language for political and business reasons, can themselves make business while using the language of the dominant center without reference to such country, which originally owns the language.

3.Using translation theories to adapt and filter the content of foreign texts.

Translation theories, especially those based on the concept of ‘purpose’, contribute in solving the inappropriateness of foreign culture problem and its relevant concerns. They can be used in filtering the source text before submitting to students as a text written in its original language from its undesired cultural elements of the foreign community. Moreover, it submits safe and smooth texts for our children if they are translated into Arabic in the form of textbooks. For example, images and foreign names and addresses can be replaced by local ones. Another example can reflect the foreign text filtered from any reference to Christianity or Western habits together with preserving the content of the knowledge without cultural distractions that may affect our children’s personalities. Hence, this process should continue whether in formal or informal education. In this respect, lifelong learning planning is recommended for controlling the schema of Islamic and Western habits as well as removing any details in the educational content that may interrupt it.

Lifelong learning is simply defined by Harper Collins Dictionary: (Social Science / Education) as the provision or use of both formal and informal learning opportunities throughout people's lives in order to foster the continuous development and improvement of the knowledge and skills required for employment and personal fulfillment. On the other hand, distance learning or online learning is highly recommended as it is proved to be effective nowadays because of the importance of social distancing and fear of easily COVID19 attack. In the past, it was effective only for people with specific circumstances (i.e. health problems, age, money...etc.) that hinder them from joining classes face-to-face. Therefore, lifelong learning by means of online learning makes learning process available for everybody and it enables us to overcome learning difficulties by using a variety of teaching methods and recording such sessions.

Lifelong learning, in addition, starts also at the time of birth when the child learns everything around himself in the surrounding environment whether formally from schools or informally from his family or his wider society. Lifelong learning is continuous then until the end of our life. It contributes also in developing skills in all domains to create more effective nationals.

Hence, the present study is not designed mainly to discuss the types and benefits of lifelong learning. It is rather designed to study the way to achieve a kind of lifelong learning which is smooth and safe by means of applying the purpose-based translation theory on certain source texts which carry inappropriate cultural elements. Translation in general is useful in transferring modern forms of knowledge in all domains which in turn intensifies the process of lifelong learning. However, semantic translation from foreign culture with their modern developments in all domains, may be offensive to our Islamic culture such as Western cultures. Therefore, a translation approach which is based on filtering the STs from its inappropriate elements prior to submitting the knowledge to the learners is considered a prerequisite these days.

3.1. The skopostheorie and determining the purpose of translation

Nord (1992) developed the skopostheorie, which is the only purpose-based theory in translation. The skopostheorie first developed (1978-83) by Hans Vermeer. He explained it as; each text is produced for a given purpose and should serve this purpose. It was developed then by Christian Nord as a translation theory when she wrote about it and concentrated on the “purpose or function” of translation in her books, Text analysis in Translation (1991) and Translation as a purposeful activity (1997) . It is considered as one of the most modern theories in translation because it was useful in finding out a solution for the eternal problem of the equivalence between

source text and target text. It tries to liberate the translation from the confinement of the source text. The aim is to explain the translation activity from the point of view of the target language. Nord's aim was to come up with a methodology which will provide students with a tool for preparing translations not only for classroom in their professional life . It is considered special among translation theories because it is the only purpose-based translation theory. To understand the basis on which the skopostheorie is based we should view translation specifically as an "intentional" activity means that the translation itself must be judged according to how well it fulfilled its purpose.

3.2. The elements of the skopostheorie

The skopostheorie has three elements; The first is the skopos or the purpose of translation, the second is coherence, which includes intertextual coherence (functioning between ST and TT situations) and intratextual coherence (fidelity or loyalty between the two languages), and the third element is culture since the skopostheorie deals with two settings; The first is the source text setting which is designed especially for its original audience that owns a certain culture, and the second is the target text setting with its target audience that has a completely different culture. In this context, the skopostheorie aims at transferring the effects of the source text, designed for a certain audience having a certain culture in a certain situation, to another audience in a different situation with a completely different culture. (it has both intercultural and interpersonal aims). A translator should produce a TT which is functioning with TT situation and its addressees. He should transfer the same effect of the ST on its receivers to the TT receivers as well as excluding undesired cultural effects. On the other hand, if the ST includes acceptable cultural elements that suit the TT audience, then the skopos becomes zero and the ST is to be translated semantically by giving a faithful translation to the

ST. The skopos of translation sometimes requires a change in the function of translation in order to achieve appropriateness between the ST and TT situations (i.e. instrumental translation or communicative translation). On the other hand, if the skopos of translation requires no change of the TT function, then the skopos is assigned zero, an exception to the rule of skopos. (i.e. documentary translation, semantic translation, etc...)

3.3.Objections to the skopostheorie

In spite of the value and the importance of the skopostheorie, as a modern theory in the field of translation, it was encountered by some objections. JONATHAN DOWNIE, introduced these objections in his essay “the end of an era?, Does the skopostheorie spell the end of the “FREE VS. LITERAL paradigm?; the first objection is summarized in the objectors’ belief that the Skopostheorie adds nothing new. But the novelty of skopostheorie is not located so much in the information it contains but in how this information is organized. The center of analysis moves from being semantic equivalence or equivalence in terms of linguistic forms to the purpose of the translation including its intended audience. The second objection is summarized in the objectors’ belief that The skopostheorie suffers from lack of ethics. But Nord replied that “Normally, since authors are not experts in translation, they are likely to insist on a faithful rendering of the source text’s surface structures. Only if they trust the translator’s loyalty will they consent to any changes of adaptations required to make the translation work in the target culture. And this confidence would again strengthen the translator’s prestige as a responsible and trustworthy partner. (Nord [1997] 2007: 125). The third objection is summarized in the objectors’ belief that Skopos reduces the status of the source text too far and this may lead to lack of ethics. But Nord ([1997] 2007: 62) sees three main reasons for detailed source text analysis. Analysis of the source text guides the

translation process in that it provides the basis for decision about; (a) the feasibility of the translation assignment, (b) which source-text units are relevant to functional translation, and (c) which translation strategy will lead to a target text meeting the requirements of the translation brief. The fourth objection to the skopostheorie is summarized in the objectors' belief that Skopostheorie is skewed towards "functionally equivalent" translation. But Nord replied that in theory, there should be no question of skopostheorie favouring one translation strategy over another as the central tenet of skopostheorie is that translators will choose their translation strategies and techniques according to the purpose of the translation, Nord (2002: 33). Nord's schema of possible text wide translation strategies. (Nord [1997] 2007: 48, 51) comes close to confirming this assumption. She lists four strategies that prioritize the documentation of features of the source culture and three that prioritize the function of the text as an "instrument for target-culture communicative interaction" (ibid :p. 51). We can conclude then that the skopostheorie seems valuable for designing a safe content for our students. Its importance can also be summarized in a number of points which can be summarized as ; first, it introduces a solution for the problem of equivalence between ST and TT and how a translator is allowed to produce an equivalent TT for his audience (i.e. students in Eastern communities). Second, the skopostheorie suggests that the skopos, the purpose, of translation controls the translator's degree of fidelity to the ST especially when he decides to filter undesired elements existing in ST. It represents also the aim of translation, the intention of the sender of translation. Third, the skopoktheorie recommends appropriateness between ST and TT situations rather than equivalence between the two texts. The skopostheorie liberates the translator from the confines of the source text. Finally, the skopostheorie opens new avenues for research and study in the domain of translation. In this paper, Skopotheorie is

recommended to allow curriculum designers submit appropriate content for students according to age, culture as well as any other elements. This functions well when we need translation for specific textbooks or parts of textbooks as well as when we need just to filter or simplify the ST without translation. To sum up, skopostheorie is useful for interlingual translation as well as for intralingual translation.

4.Results and Recommendations

- Teaching foreign languages in general and English language in specific to children is a prerequisite these days because all modern inventions and discoveries are written in foreign languages.
- Focusing on the four skills of learning any human language is recommended in order to deliver a foreign language the right way.
- Modern methods of teaching English are essential in order to highlight the four skills equally.
- We should determine the elements of national identity in order to preserve them. They are summarized in ; religion, language and culture.
- We can teach our young students foreign languages safely if we determine the unrequired elements in the foreign culture and extract them.
- We should not confuse foreign language and second language by understanding the difference between language acquisition and language learning. This understanding is important because it alleviates the concern relevant to the interference of foreign culture.
- We should put in mind that if a student has acquired his mother tongue before school age and then learned a foreign language, there is no possibility of weakening the mother tongue lexicon because the foreign language will be learned in school and not acquired in community.

- We should also put in mind that schema is formed by culture and traditions and will be enhanced by parents and teachers for the sake of native culture. Hence, we should be careful while exposing our children to foreign language and foreign culture by trying to extract undesired elements to supply them with a safe content. In other words, we can protect our children from acquiring undesired elements of foreign culture while teaching a foreign language.
- Effective language learning includes putting an emphasis on the four skills of learning any foreign language; reading, writing, listening and speaking. The problem is included in the English teachers' continuous focus only on the skills of reading and writing (the competence). On the other hand, listening and speaking (performance) may not occupy the same status of reading and writing. Exams on the other hand also put most of the emphasis of teaching a foreign language on the skill of **writing**, a single skill of a four-skill language.
- New methodologies are recommended in primary schools in order to teach our children English language effectively. i.e. They should listen to real-life conversations made by native speakers in order to have real experience with language. They should also be given the chance to communicate together in English or with native speakers, to be employed in each primary school for this purpose.
- Undergraduate English department students should receive high-quality training on the four skills of English in order to qualify them as perfect English teachers. I.e. language labs with modern software are essential.

- English literature and western culture should be filtered by intralingual translation (i.e. Modifying ST) before submission to young students.
- Translation has an eminent role in designing safe contents for education by adapting improper cultural elements to fit our culture.
- Arabicizing sciences is not the solution to get rid of the effect of foreign culture. It is better to teach our students perfect English and then let them discover and depend on themselves.
- Lifelong learning is very important these days for all ages , at any time and at any place.
- Lifelong learning is a prerequisite for everybody, so it should be carried out willingly. - Purpose-based approach of translation is useful in filtering the source texts before submitting them to our learners.
- Purpose-based approach of translation can be applied then on a variety of texts in all domains in order to obtain a safe and easy -to understand textbooks
- Purpose-based approach of translation saves our new generations from the risk of undesired elements of Western culture.
- It can be a useful tool especially in filtering English literature before submitting it to young students.
- It is also useful in alleviating the load on the teachers in trying to simplify the curriculum to the learners.
- Finally, we conclude that it is possible to teach children English without affecting national identity.

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Online resources

1-<http://www.brandingasia.com-natid.pdf>

- 2-<http://www.unet.univie.ac.at/~a0102141/downloads/National%20Identity%20-%20NATID.pdf>
- 3-<http://www.alleydog.com/cognotes/schemas.html>
- 4-http://sites.wiki.ubc.ca/etec510/Schema_Theory#Definition
- 5-<http://www.davidbricker.com/clientsguideSchemaTherapy.pdf>
- 6-<http://ibpsychologynotes.wordpress.com/>
- 7-http://wiki.answers.com/Q/Language_competence_and_performance
- 8-<http://www.davidbricker.com/clientsguideSchemaTherapy.pdf>

