



The Teacher's Strategies in Teaching English in Appropriating the Foreign Cultural Contents to Teach English within EFL Context in Jambi

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Abstract. The competency of teachers in teaching English is necessary to determine the success of the students in learning foreign language. In teaching English, the teacher may not separate the language and the culture in order to make the students comprehend the use of the language as a whole. Nevertheless, many language teachers only focus on teaching the students four skills in English, they are writing, reading, listening and speaking. They ignore the importance of teaching cultural contents in their classroom. Meanwhile, the foreign cultural contents material is needed for the students to avoid the cultural gaps or to avoid the culture shock, and make students more tolerant of other people's cultures. This research is conducted with the aim to analyse the teacher's strategies in appropriating the foreign cultural contents to teach English within EFL context in Jambi. This research belongs to qualitative research. The data were taken from the result of interview. The researcher interviewed 6 English teachers who have more than 15 years of teaching experience. The textbook that the researcher used as the reference in doing this research is "*Speak Out*" that is written by Clare & Wilson and published by *Pearson Education*. The finding of this research showed that there were three strategies in teaching foreign cultural contents, they were comparing approach, introducing culture as identity and technology in teaching culture.

Keywords: cultural content · internationally-published textbook · appropriating · teachers' strategy · EFL context

1 Introduction

Many non-native English speakers are interested to master English. Since the numbers of the English learners are rising, the publishers of English textbook tend to see this as an opportunity to make their English coursebooks to be spread all of the world and they see this as a chance for business in education sector. There are two kinds of textbook that the teacher mostly used in teaching practice. The textbooks that are published by local publisher is called 'locally-published textbook'. Meanwhile, the textbooks that are published internationally are called 'internationally-published textbook' [1]. Moreover, Zacharias [2] in her study examined that internationally-published textbooks are used more highly in Indonesia than locally-published textbooks. She explains that the material

which is published internationally is preferred since it provides a more accurate and authentic exposure to English. The unavailability of the locally published material is also one of the reasons why they prefer internationally published material.

Similarly, Sinurat et al. [3] explains in his study that the EFL teachers prefer to internationally-published textbooks in meeting student's needs in the classrooms. Moreover, Narkhalaji [4] explains that the internationally-published textbooks are not designed for a particular group of learners with specific needs. That's why, the competency of English teachers plays important role in making the students able to use English thoroughly. However, the textbook that is published and written in Indonesia make it as 'a stepchild' in its own home [2].

In line with, Nurjanah [5] mentions that some teachers only focus on four skills in English, such as speaking, writing, reading and listening. They seem to ignore the need to learn culture from the language itself.

Karam [6] examines five strategies in teaching culture in the language classroom. They are; (1). Creating an Authentic Environment Strategy. This strategy use displays, posters, bulletin boards, maps and realia. Those can create a visual and tangible picture of the target culture and especially it is necessary for the students who live far from the target culture, (2). The Slice-of-Life Strategy. In this strategy, the teacher usually shows a small segment of another culture such as songs or recordings of written topic and usually presents it in the beginning of the class, It can attract students' interest and students' attention, (3). Culture Capsule Strategy. In this strategy, the teacher presents the discussion about cultural differences of the students with the language culture that is being taught in the classroom. The teacher describes information orally in order to build students' interest toward the language culture of foreign countries, (4). Quiz Strategy. A quiz can be used for the foreign language teachers to attract students' interest and involvement. It can be used for giving a test related to the previous materials that the teacher has given or for giving a new information for the students. The teacher can provide the correct answer through reading, listening, or videos, then the teacher can provide additional information, and (5). Self- Awareness Strategy. This strategy is used to increase student's awareness of basic beliefs that can build their values, actions, and attitude. In this strategy, the teachers may use sensitivity exercise, questionnaires of self-assessment, value orientation checklist, and also problem solving.

In addition, internationalization is necessary in integrating the culture teaching in the classroom [7]. Culture teaching is also important to attract the students' interest in learning foreign language. It is recommended for the English teachers to use cultural information that is always present through everyday lives, expose the students to foreign media. Similarly, Luo [8] revealed that the popular culture texts are useful for increasing college EFL students' confidence in their deep understanding of their English skills. In addition, this assignment also prompt the students to have other important skills that will be useful for their career in the future.

Kramsch [9] explains that the material presented in the text is not necessarily authentic material from the local area, but interactions between class participants are interactions related to broader social, the historical, and also cultural issues. Furthermore, English language has been appropriated by the teachers and the students around the

world to completely out of the original English-speaking world [10]. It serves individual and social needs in the local zone. In addition, appropriate pedagogy must prepare learners to be global and local speakers of English and to feel at home in local and international cultures [11]. Besides, teacher should also consider students learning style [12].

There have been several studies into foreign cultural contents in the English textbook even not many researchers have investigated this topic. Harumi [13] proposes three parts of teaching culture as guideline in language classroom.

The first is culture around language. It refers to the culture as experience in behaviour of people in accompanying language use. Halloween and Christmas have been popular customs of people in western countries. Eventhough not all people in English are Christian. The second is culture in language. This is related to the patterns of thought of people. The terms *brother* and *sister* are examples of culture in language classes in Japan. Since people in Japan do not have differences in addressing people in different ages. Lastly, culture through language is depicted through cultural information that is transferred in cross cultural communication. For example, Singapore, it is a favorite country for the writers of the textbook in Japan. They suggest the culture through language must consider the use of English global in today's world.

Moreover, Dema & Moeler [14] in their study entitled show that there are two strategies in teaching culture in language classrooms. Those are Inquiry Teaching Approach and Teaching Culture Using Technology. Inquiry Approach permits students in asking questions that are interesting for them, collecting important information, creating answers through investigation, presenting the findings, and formulating new questions from the original questions. Meanwhile, Technology in Culture Teaching gives the teachers opportunities in creating effective instructional materials to teach not only the language structure but also target culture itself. Interactive media helps the teachers to not to depend on printed materials and more engage with authentic cultural content. The students also can access and explore the materials freely.

2 Methods

This study was a qualitative study which aims to analyze the teacher's strategies in appropriating the foreign cultural contents to teach within EFL context in Jambi. According to Creswell [15], qualitative research plays the role in the natural setting of the language usage and let the researcher to build a level of detail about the individual, and help the researcher to interpret the data. This qualitative research let the participants to share their opinion freely without any persuasion. Then, as supported by Gay & Mills [16] the context in qualitative research is not controlled or manipulated by the participants' perspectives and interacted with them during the research. This qualitative research let the participants to share their opinion freely without any persuasion. Moreover, they argue that this approach is in order to search in depth a program, an event, an activity, a process, or one or more individuals.

3 Results and Discussions

Three subthemes were obtained from the participants' responses. The first theme that emerged from the interview is comparing approach. As the result of the interview, the data showed that the participants chose the comparing approach as a strategy in teaching foreign cultural content to EFL students in Jambi. Based on the participants' feeling, half of participants in this research prefer to compare the local culture to the western culture in teaching foreign cultural contents toward their students. The similarities and the differences between two cultures to make the students are able to comprehend the use of the language as whole in order to avoid cultural gaps or culture shock. So that, the students are expected to be more tolerant of other cultures outside their own culture. This finding was emerged in Karam [6], he examined that the teacher presents the discussion about cultural differences of the students with the language culture that is being taught in the classroom. The teacher describes information orally in order to build students' interest toward the language culture of foreign countries.

The second theme is introducing culture as identity. Based on the result of the interview with the participants, introducing culture as identity is their strategy in teaching foreign cultural contents in the classroom. The participants reported that teaching foreign cultural contents are needed to make the students know their own identity and introducing other cultures does not mean asking the students to practice foreign culture, but it is intended to give the students a new information and knowledge about foreign countries. A culture was described as a concept of human behavior and not a habit that is believed by a particular group. Another participant explained that a foreign culture needs to be taught, teaching culture does not mean asking the students to practice foreign culture in the context of students' lives. Delivering the foreign cultural contents is the way to reveal to the students that in other parts of the world there are many diverse traditions and customs that are sometimes different or could be the same as the culture of the students themselves.

This finding is in line with Tseng & Cha [7], they argue that it is suggested for the English teachers to use cultural information that is always present through everyday lives, expose the students to the foreign media such as reading books and magazines, watching some movies or television programs and using the internet. Additionally, Karam also examined that The Slice-of-Life Strategy is useful in the language classroom [6]. The teacher could shows a small segment of another culture such as songs or recordings of written topic and presents it in the beginning of the class to attract students' interest and students' attention.

The third theme is technology in teaching culture. Based on the result of the interview, using technology in teaching culture is needed to present authentic materials. Technology helps teachers in providing interesting learning media so that the material can be delivered more realistically. Through audio-visual techniques, teachers can easily explain the materials without having to always rely on old methods such as printed books or other printed resources. This finding was consistent with Dema et al. [17], he showed that technology in culture teaching helps foreign language teachers to have various opportunities to make effective instructional materials. Using technology in teaching, the students have more opportunities in exploring the materials and resources.

4 Conclusion

The findings of this research enlighten the teacher's strategies in teaching foreign cultural contents to teach English within EFL context in Jambi province. In doing the interview, the participants shared their feeling about the importance of foreign cultural contents materials in English textbook and their strategies in teaching the foreign cultural contents in their English classroom. Related to the research question, there were three main strategies in teaching cultural contents to teach English within EFL context in Jambi. They were comparing approach, introducing culture as identity, and the technology in teaching culture.

Acknowledgments. First of all, thanks be to Allah SWT for his blessing and mercies. Because of him, the researcher finally can conduct this research paper. Then, I would like to thank to the advisor Desvalini Anwar, S.S., M. Hum., Ph.D., for the advice, motivation, and guidance while writing this research. Next, the researcher would like to thank to the all English teachers in Jambi who had been participated in this research.

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