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International Conference 2014*

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Conference Proceedings

**“The Global Trends in English Language Teaching,
Literature, and Translation”**

**Faculty of Languages & Arts
Semarang State University**

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Faculty of Languages and Arts, Unnes

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Preface

Last year, we discussed about issues and challenges in English Language Teaching, Literature, and Translation but at present, we discuss The Global Trends in English Language Teaching, Literature, and Translation. We also expect that there are many lecturers, researchers, teachers, students and those interested who would like to contribute to the better relation among nations.

Re-Elected again as the chair of ELTLT, in this 3rd English Language Teaching, Literature, and Translation International Conference 2014, I would like to extend our sincere gratitude to all presenters, especially for Assoc. Prof. Pam Allen and Prof. Richard Kiely, MA., P.hD for accepting the invitation to speak as the keynote speakers.

We would like to do best for the smooth of the programs. The committee would also like to thank the Rector of Semarang State University, Prof. Fathur Rokhman and the Dean of Languages and Arts Faculty, Prof. Agus Nuryatin for their full support. The deepest thank also goes to Dr. Issy Yuliasri, M.Pd as the Head of English Department. The last, we expect all presenters and participants to have wonderful conference at present and we hope all of you would like to join 4th ELTLT next year.

Bambang Purwanto, S.S., M.Hum

Chair of ELTLT Committee
Faculty of Languages and Arts
Semarang State University



Welcome Note from the Dean of Languages and Arts Faculty

As the Dean of Languages and Arts Faculty, we are proud to have an annual international conference such as ELTLT 2014.

To be chosen as presenters for the parallel presentation in this conference is a considerable honor and achievement. I would like to congratulate the presenters who have been selected, as well as the reviewers who have chosen the successful presenters. Obviously not everyone interested in the chosen topic could attend this conference, so the post-conference proceeding will present to a much wider audience issues related to the topic. The proceeding is also a proof that the contributions of presenters are valued.

I also would like to offer my congratulations and appreciation to the organising committee who have been working hard to prepare the conference, and to all keynote speakers, presenters, and participants for such an impressive conference.

We hope that through this annual ELTLT conference, there will be a stronger bond amongst academics, especially those with the expertise of English language teaching, literature, and translation. I wish you a wonderful conference.

Semarang, September 2014

Prof. Dr. Agus Nuryatin, M. Hum
The Dean of Languages and Arts Faculty
Semarang State University



Welcome Note from the Head of English Department

We are privileged to organize this annual conference. This year ELTLT is actually the third conference; the first, namely ELTL (English Language Teaching and Literature) Conference, was last 2 year. We have received quite a lot of abstracts and most were accepted for presentation. Surprisingly, the number was doubled as compared to last year and last 2 years. This means that more academics are interested in our conference and trust us as organizer of the conference.

Therefore, I would like to congratulate the organizing committee who has been working hard to prepare the conference. I also would like to extend my deepest gratitude to all keynote speakers, presenters, and participants for their contribution to our conference.

I do hope that this annual ELTLT conference could serve as a bridge that channels bond amongst academics, especially those with the expertise of English language teaching, literature, and translation.

With best wishes for a rewarding and successful conference!

Dr. Issy Yuliasri, M.Pd

Head of English Department

Faculty of Languages and Arts

Semarang State University (UNNES)



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RESPONDING TO MULTICULTURAL ENGLISH CLASSROOMS: TEACHERS' POLICY TOWARDS INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Multilingual classrooms present a fact that each student arrives with not only their mother tongue but also their way of interacting and expressing themselves according to strategies and conventions learnt in their own linguistic and cultural community. When they learn English (with various culture contents) they also come into contact with various cultures at the same time; the culture of their classmates, the culture of the teacher, and the culture of the textbook and teaching material.

These cultural-lingual contacts in the context of learning second or foreign language possibly involve the acquisition of a second (or third) cultural identity (Brown, 2000). The contact and the process of acquisition present opportunity for the teachers to develop students' intercultural communicative competence. Yet, the process can be disrupted and take the students to experience culture shock and conflict if the teachers are lack of classroom policy in managing it. This aspect is often neglected during teaching-learning process in which few attentions are paid to how supports are provided for students to go through the acculturation process. This paper, then, addresses some issues that ELT teachers could consider as part of their classroom policy when they work with the students experiencing the cultural-lingual contact aimed at developing intercultural communicative competence.

Keywords: multilingual, multicultural, intercultural communicative competence

Introduction

It is a reality of an ELT classroom that it is comprised of diverse learners regarding their gender, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, religion, linguistic heritage and cultural background. Concerning cultural background, each learner brings with them the cultural mores and patterns of accepted behavior learned in their native culture which may diverse

from their classmates and teacher. They arrive with not only their mother tongue but also their way of interacting and expressing themselves according to strategies and conventions learnt in their own linguistic and cultural community. Then, they are introduced to “alien” language and are expected to master it along with its culture (culture acquisition) which is divergent from theirs. Cultural shock then might be emerged as a possible cultural impact. Multiculturalism, in this context, may stand as unnecessary blocks in their way of learning the language.

Multicultural Classroom – Challenges Presented.

Multicultural classroom, apart from the advantages it might brought to, presents some challenges to the teachers. It may range from the growing cultural diversity, teacher – student and student – student relationship pattern, the acquisition of second cultural identity to textbooks which portray the member of the dominant group.

Firstly, the fact that ELT classrooms comprised by diverse cultural background is unavoidable. Yet, it should be considered wisely and managed well. The motto *unity above diversity* and the expectation that classroom can be a *melting pot* for cultural differences are being challenged. The belief of *melting pot* is that the learners with different ethnic groups and races background would completely assimilate and become one group. The objective is minimizing the differences and diversity exist for they are reckoned as the source of cultural conflict. However, this expectation will meet some cultural constraints and call for culture defense because ethnic groups have always been different from one another. Many could not and did not want to melt away their identities. Learners’ cultural defense may influence their attitude towards the language being studied which in turn will influence their achievement.

Secondly, incorporating culture in instructional activities will not be free from culture-based problems. The teacher-student and student-student relationship may encounter *cultural bewilderment* or even *culture shock*. The pattern of relationship and interaction exist in the classroom is a cultural pattern itself. From an early age, students and teachers are socialized into (cultural) expectation and frame about what a teacher is, what a students is, what kind of interactions are appropriate in the class, how should they engage in teaching and learning processes. This is in line with what McKay (2000) asserts that teachers and students approach

the situation with different expectations about their roles and these differences are based both on the teachers' and the students' education outside the classroom and on their previous experience within classroom in different culture. Heath (1984, cited in McKay 2000) stresses that the problem is likely to be greater in classrooms where the teacher and students, belonging to different cultures, bring different ways of believing, behaving and valuing and different expectations about what should occur inside a classroom.

When they learn English (with various culture content) they come into contact with various culture at the same time; the culture of their classmates, the culture of the teacher, and the culture of the textbook and teaching material. Brown (2000) states that learning second or foreign language involves the acquisition of a second (cultural) identity. The contact with other cultures and acquiring second cultural identity can be disrupted and take them to experience culture shock. Unfortunately, this aspect is often neglected during teaching-learning process. Few attention are paid to how supports are provided for students to go through the acculturation process. Besides, students' native culture and cultural experience are able to be exploited as the source to support the process of second language learning.

The acquisition of second cultural identity is the third challenge present to the teachers. As the students begin to lose some of the ties of their native culture and to adapt to the second culture, they experience feelings of chagrin or regret, mixed with the fearful anticipation of entering a new group. They suffer from feelings of social uncertainty or dissatisfaction-, as a significant aspect of the relationship between language learning and attitude toward the foreign culture -*the concept of anomie* (Brown, 2000). Anomie might be described as the first symptom of the stage of acculturation. A feeling of "homesickness", where one feels neither bound firmly to one's native culture nor fully adapted to the second culture. It is unavoidable since becoming bilingual or multilingual means becoming bicultural or multicultural to some extent. The development of instructional activity must consider this issue by being sensitive to this cultural state and establishing the bridge across them otherwise it will obstruct the further language learning process. He believes that the language mastery might not effectively occur before the acculturation stage or even more likely, that learners might never be successful in their mastery of the language.

What culture contents present to the students would also bring another challenge to the teacher. English is spoken by billions of people worldwide but when opening a EFL/ESL textbook, *whose culture is presented* ? In all probability the culture content presented are the mainstream cultures. Mainstream content means the majority groups, whose culture is the dominant one, are the central of the discussion whereas the minority groups are excluded from the content objectives.

The mainstream culture presents in the instructional activity is one of the major ways of stereotype and ethnocentrism are reinforced and perpetrated. On one hand, mainstream-centric instructional activity is negative in its consequences for mainstream students because it reinforces their false sense of superiority and gives them misleading concepts of their relationship with other ethnic groups. On the other hand learners who belong to the minority cultural group can feel alienation in the learning process, alienation from people in their home culture, the target culture and from themselves (Brown, 2000).

Furthermore, the way instructional activity, in this case text books, portrays the member of dominant cultural group along with their ideas, lifestyle, norm and values may lead to culture homogenization (or more narrowly Americanization). This can be counter-productive since the minority will feel threatened culturally (to some extent religiously) and it calls for a defense. Naisbitt (1994) states that feeling pressured and threatened, people will usually seek refuge in their primordial identities including cultural one. This cultural – psychological context may hinder learners' development of individual as well as group identities. Lie (2002) points out that it is likely that students who are underrepresented and/or negatively stereotyped in the learning materials are vulnerable to the feeling of ambivalence about their group identification. To some extent, this may be blocks stand in learners' learning process.

The Proposed Ideas to Teachers' Policy in Responding to Multicultural Classrooms

The emerging challenges above are inevitable aspect due to the inseparable and intertwining relation of language teaching and learning and culture. What seems to be important is the measures taken to ensure that culture will not act as a barrier in ELT process. One measure is redeveloping and construct a more culture sensitive instructional to facilitate the enhancement

of critical cultural consciousness among teachers as well as learners and to promote the preservation of local cultures. This imperative obviously calls for particular teachers' policy in addressing the challenges in their teaching

Firstly, related to the mainstream culture presented in the instructional activity, especially text books, the teacher should hold and take control of English used and culture context displayed in the classroom. They have the power and freedom to select the materials and adapt their instructional activity to their learners' cultural context. Instead of relying solely on the text books which portray limited cultural contexts, they may freely display all cultural contexts based on the cultural configuration of the class and encourage an inter-culturality – relating first (native) culture to second culture and reflecting on perceptions of them. When learners are given the opportunity to see their culture from the point of view of another culture, they are able to understand their culture better and see how it interacts with cultures and what are its unique and distinct characteristics. The theme and content-based instruction approach will provide wider room for this purpose. Through this approach, teachers offer students many opportunities to communicate in the target language and provide content (in this case multi-cultural issues) for this communication.

In working with the inter-culturality concepts through the textbooks and instructional materials, Cortazi & Jin (1999) propose three pattern namely target culture materials, source culture materials and international culture materials. McKay (2005) affirms that each of the pattern present their benefits and disadvantages related to the role and contribution of culture to the teaching learning process, the achievement of students' goal in learning English and the building of students' intercultural competence.

Second, concerning the feeling of being threaten and pressured culturally, the teachers are suggested to bridge the gap by balancing the issues of the western/dominant cultures with the local/minority culture issues. The Euro-centrism should be balanced with the inclusion of the local wisdom for it will help the learner for not falling into seeking and embracing their cultural identity which may lead to ethnocentrism. However, the inclusion itself may not be an easy measure considering the vast diversity of the local cultures. It is the time to give the room for the local perspectives in developing instructional activity. This is in line with the

spirit of autonomy in which the educators in each region should get involve actively in determining the curriculum content for their own context. Lie (2002) argues that the lack of resources and power of the local region should not be used to justify the delay of power and control to local level. In cases where the local educators are not ready to develop their own materials, the curriculum developers and textbook writers at the national level should involve their local counterparts as partners and empower them as local resource people who can later develop their own curriculum.

Third, the expectation of having the classroom as a melting pot should leave behind for its potential of evoking culture defense which is led to negative attitude towards the culture of the language being studied and the culture of others. Some research findings highlight the significant relationship between attitude towards the culture of the language being studied to motivation and to proficiency attainment. It demonstrates that second/foreign language learners benefit from positive attitude for it may lead them to increased motivation and to successful attainment of proficiency. The class should be directed to attain the essence of *mosaic* in which learners' cultural and ethnic background could be proudly displayed. Each cultural group and ethnic of the learner was seen as separate and distinct, but contributing its own color, shape and design toward the creation of an attractive mosaic of the classroom. Diversity allows the learners to have an opportunity to have perspective and reference frames and shape the attitude that are gained through studying and experiencing other cultures and ethnic group. Fishman via Lie (2002) joins the line by stating that absence of diversity would lead to the dehumanization, mechanization, and utter impoverishment of human beings.

Fourth, the teacher with learners whose cultural backgrounds differ from their own should be aware of the possibility of encountering culture shock in terms of teacher-student and student-student relationship for the learners may find contradictory (cultural) expectation for their (cultural) participation for this is an unavoidable aspect. Immediate judgment which is led to stereotyping should be avoided. Yet, culture shock can be viewed positively as a beneficial and profound cross-cultural learning experiences. It is a set of situation or circumstances involving intercultural communication in which the learners and teachers, as a result of the experiences, become aware of their own growth, learning and change. Brown (2000) further

explains that as a result of culture shock process, the learners and teachers have gained a new perspective on themselves and has come to understand their own identity in term significant to themselves.

There is a caution of simplification measure by generalizing the difference since it will lead to different cultural problem. The students' cultural configuration itself is comprised by diverse culture groups. Take for example the ELT Indonesian classroom. What do we mean by students' source culture (Indonesian culture) may be a generalized picture since one classroom may comprise of more than five culture groups. Categorizing students' source culture bases on nationality will surely result to the denial of cultural diversity of an ELT classroom.

Immediate judgment about students' culture of learning which is led to stereotyping should be avoided. The teacher should base their cultural view about their students' culture of learning on careful studies and extensive classroom observation since classroom interaction and relationship develop dynamically. If we consider classroom interaction is the culture interaction, a dialogic relationship, then the students are progressing in their cultural meaning and identity negotiation. It implies that classroom interaction pattern is a dynamic process and are "framed, negotiated, modified, confirmed, and challenged through interaction with others (Collier & Thomas, 1998 cited in Cortazzi & Jin, 1999).

Fifth, in assisting the students whose feelings neither bound firmly to their native culture nor fully adapted to the second culture (the culture of their classmates, the culture of the teacher, and the culture of the textbook and teaching material), the teacher should attempt to bridge the gap by supporting them to establish their "third place" in which they position themselves between their first culture (C1) and the second culture (C2) (Kramsch, 1993). This "third place" involves the learners in an objective and subjective reflection of C1 and C2 from which they must choose their own meanings that best reflect their personal perspectives. The students are encouraged to reflect on comparisons between cultures and form their own perspective on them. Hence, this conception of culture emphasizes the importance of individual interpretations of culture rather than rigid stereotypical notions.

This establishment of third place should be supported by some systematic activities, otherwise, the goal of reflective activity will not be achieved. Below is adapted ideas (adapted from Kramch, 1993) of how the teacher can assist their students in conducting their reflective activity. First, the teacher can establish a sphere of inter-culturality, - in which the learners are encouraged to relate C1 and C2 and reflect on perceptions of them. The more reflective activity they have, the clearer relationship between different cultures they will find. Second, the focus of the teaching culture should be on interpersonal process, - the instructional activities should be gone beyond the presentation of cultural facts and moving towards a process of understanding what seems to be the “foreignness” of other cultures (macro-features such as specific cultural values and attitudes). The differences should be deliberately made visible to the students. By finding the differences they are able to understand their own culture better and see how different cultures interact one another what are its unique and distinct characteristics. By increasing students’ awareness of culture differences, their appreciation and respect for cultural differences can be developed.

Third, the cultural differences should not be viewed as only national traits. Many other aspects of culture such as age, race, gender, social class should be taken into account. The teacher can exploit some of the interesting or problematic pattern of classroom interaction and relationship as the source of discussion. This, however, demands an intercultural knowledge, skills and awareness of the teacher. Fourth, the teacher should cross the disciplinary boundaries, - understanding culture by encompassing other subjects as sociology, ethnography and socio-linguistics. The explication of the differences between cultures –how does particular culture operate, how does it produce its values and concept, what are its differences- is essential to be provided for the students so that the negative stereotypes can be broken. Being able to do so the teachers should facilitate themselves with such culture knowledge and understanding as the external forces and internal forces which contribute to the existence of particular cultural frame, concept, value and practices. Surely, their background as English language teacher is not an adequate resources and key to the access of cultural knowledge for this purposes.

If this process of acquiring culture and language is successful, learners would be able to use English in such a way to communicate effectively and appropriately and also in a way that

reflects their own local cultures and personal beliefs (Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996 cited in Baker, 2003).

Conclusion

Culture is an inevitable aspect of language, therefore the existence of “foreign culture” in the EFL/ESL classroom cannot be avoided. Each of the teaching and learning component – teacher, students and their classmates, teaching materials, textbook – brings with them their own culture mores and system. Furthermore, the enormous spread of English along with its culture hegemony calls for national sentiment which may lead to either teacher’s or students’ cultural defense. Yet, ESL/EFL classroom could benefit from the appropriate management and exploitation of cultural issues which demand particular policy of the teachers. By determining effective culture content which based its choice on the goal of teaching, students’ goal of learning and external context of the classroom, culture presented in the classroom will not be an impediment to teaching learning process. It would both support EFL/ESL classroom to achieve its instructional goal and assure English and English language teaching’s role in the preservation of local languages and cultures. Moreover, if cultural diversity is managed well, it will contribute significant role to the achievement of teaching-learning’s goal especially the development of intercultural communicative competence.

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