

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

### A. Research Background

Education plays an important role in the process of civilization. Education is a person's effort to become a true human being. Of course, people living in a society have their own values that characterize that society. Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System in Chapter I General Provisions article 1 paragraph 16 states that community-based education is education based on religious, cultural, social characteristics, aspirations, and community potential as the embodiment of education from, by, and for the community.<sup>1</sup>

In line with that, Hasbullah said that education is a person's attempt to develop his personality in accordance with the values of society and culture.<sup>2</sup> Communities have inherent culture and influence each other. HAR Tilaar also emphasized that without the process of cultural education, it cannot take place and develop.<sup>3</sup> This means that education plays an important role in the development of culture.

And nowadays, language education is often seen as a product of cultural development. On the other hand, the formation of culture cannot be separated from the role of the dominant language. Kramsch Risager formulated three close relationships between language and culture, stating that language is a "part", "index", and "symbol" of culture.<sup>4</sup> Language becomes a cultural symbol because it is a sign system in which language contains cultural values. People can better recognize and differentiate one another by observing

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<sup>1</sup> Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia No. 20 Tahun 2003 tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional.

<sup>2</sup> Hasbullah, *Dasar-Dasar Ilmu Pendidikan*, ( Jakarta: PT. Raja Grafindo Persada), 2009.

<sup>3</sup> HAR Tilaar, "*Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, dan Masyarakat Madani Indonesia*", (Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya ), 2002.

<sup>4</sup> Kramsch Risager, "*Language and culture: Global flows and local complexity*" Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters, 2006.

how they use language. And understanding the relationship between language and culture is important for second language teaching, one of which is teaching English.

In Indonesia itself, learning English begins to be taught from elementary to college. This provision is based on the English curriculum which recognizes the importance of developing language skills in learning English. The objectives of the English curriculum include the notion of social, functional and contextual action, which indicates that students must learn English with the culture of the target community to achieve the objectives of the English curriculum. This is a form of intercultural competence that is included in curriculum competencies.<sup>5</sup>

Even though the name intercultural itself is not used directly in the curriculum, the core competencies of intercultural competencies are used as additional competencies in one of the Indonesian textbooks which is better known as cultural awareness. Cultural awareness is a key qualification for intercultural competence. Therefore, the presence of cultural awareness in the curriculum is very helpful in increasing students' cultural awareness. However, teachers sometimes neglect to integrate and provide relevant information regarding the culture of the target language. Good language acquisition does not only come from knowing or understanding how the structure and vocabulary of the language are used, but also requires an understanding of the culture that uses the language itself.<sup>6</sup>

When teaching English culture to students, teachers must understand the importance of intercultural competence in teaching foreign languages. So, teachers need to know how to teach culture in language classes. Then, the teacher can apply them in his teaching and help his students develop intercultural competence. In particular, the need to study them increased

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<sup>5</sup> Ichda Faridatuunnisa, *Kebijakan dan Pelaksanaan Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris untuk SD di Indonesia*, Univ. Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa, 2020.

<sup>6</sup> Marhamah, Riadhul et al., *“Integrating Target Language Culture into Teaching Learning EFL”* (Syiah Kuala University Margana), 2017

with the onset of globalization and the emergence of the Internet. In addition, transnational and cultural issues are other issues that must be scrutinized in the context of the emergence of globalization.

In the Indonesian curriculum, the ways of Western or British culture and their differences from Indonesian culture are mentioned in different sections, and sometimes presentations of cultural awareness are barely linked. This situation is often one of the factors that causes English teachers not to include cultural awareness in their teaching materials. Another factor that causes English teachers not to include cultural awareness in their teaching materials is due to the teacher's lack of knowledge and experience in teaching cultural awareness. There are not many types of specific training that teachers have that cover the importance of teaching cultural education and the best way of delivering it, which can improve the ability of English teachers to teach cultural awareness in English classes.

Therefore, the main challenges for the teachers is to decide how to integrate cultural awareness into language classes. However, the teachers must consider both factors, especially in situations where they have to incorporate cultural awareness into English lessons. For example, in a multicultural classroom, an English teacher must incorporate cultural awareness because students are more likely to face different problems because of their different cultural backgrounds. Another situation where English teachers have to integrate cultural awareness into their lessons is when students choose more than one foreign language due to the high demands of practicing languages with multiple native speakers of the language.

From the statements above, to prevent and overcome other phenomena related to existing cultural problems, there must be improvements in teaching to build students' cultural awareness as the next generation of the Indonesian nation. There have been several previous studies related to integrating cultural awareness in language teaching language classes that

have been conducted. First, there was a study conducted by Evi Saluveer in 2004 which gave an overview of how cultural teaching is seen in the literature on foreign language education, the situation of teaching and learning culture in Estonian secondary schools. And also a study conducted by S.Ipek Kuru Gonen and Sercan Saglam in 2012 which aims to examine culture and cultural teaching in different contexts of foreign language teaching. However, when compared to other studies, this study has some differences. First, the subject of this research was conducted to the two English teachers who taught in the language program class at MA NU AL-Hidayah. Secondly, the focus of this study is only to find out the ways that teachers integrate cultural awareness in language classes, and the challenges they have to face. At MA NU AL-Hidayah, students come from different cultural backgrounds because of the strategic location of the school building which also has a boarding school foundation where students come from various regions in Indonesia. Regarding this factor, it will be necessary for English teachers to integrate cultural awareness into their teaching materials and choose the best way to do so. Therefore, the researcher chose MA NU AL-Hidayah as the research location, English teachers and the students as the participant.

## **B. Research Focus and Scope**

This research focuses on integrating cultural awareness in the process of teaching English as a foreign language at MA NU AL-Hidayah. In this study, researchers realized that teachers must be able to integrate a culture of awareness into their teaching materials. This research also focuses on how teachers do it and the challenges teachers face regarding issues relate to cultural awareness in teaching English as a foreign language.

## **C. Research Problem**

Based on the background of the existing problems, this research is intended to find out:

1. How do teachers integrate cultural awareness in teaching English as a foreign language at MA NU AL-Hidayah?
2. What challenges do teachers face in integrating cultural awareness in teaching English as a foreign language at MA NU AL-Hidayah?

#### **D. Research Objectives**

Given the problem statement that has been mentioned, this study is expected to analyze:

1. Teacher application in integrating cultural awareness in English classroom,
2. Challenges faced by teachers in integrating cultural awareness in English classes.

#### **E. Research Significances**

This research is expected to provide benefits to other people who are classified as follows:

##### **1. Theoretical Significance**

The results of this study are expected to increase the number of scientific sources that can be used by other people for their studies and references regarding the analysis of cultural awareness integration in teaching English as a foreign language at MA NU AL-Hidayah.

##### **2. Practical Significance**

###### **a. For English Teachers**

This research is expected to make a pedagogical contribution in understanding the nature of English teachers' talent in teaching cultural awareness and provide alternative way for integrating cultural awareness in English teaching classes.

###### **b. For Students**

This research is expected to contribute to improving the characteristics of students in Indonesia regarding cultural awareness. It is hoped that they will be able to contribute to intercultural competence, particularly in the area of cultural awareness.

###### **c. For Future Researchers**

This research is expected to be a reference source that can help other researchers who have similar research to this research.

## F. Definition of Key Terms

1. Cultural awareness: as the ability to recognize and understand the influence of culture on people's values and behavior. The implications of cultural awareness on understanding the need to consider culture an important factor in certain situations.<sup>7</sup> At a fundamental level, cultural awareness is knowledge that makes people feel that they know a culture. It can be concluded that cultural awareness is a person's ability to see, be aware of cultural values and cultural customs that enter.
2. Integrate: the ability to make connections between different elements of information and summarize concepts in a meaningful way.<sup>8</sup> In this study, integrating is called the way teachers include cultural awareness material in the teaching-learning process.

## G. Organization of Thesis

Chapter 1 is an introduction that consists of a background that explains how this research appears, how this research gained the problem, and something that explains the background of this research.

Chapter 2 is about the theoretical framework that correlates with the previous chapter. This chapter provides various theories and material related to the research matters

Chapter 3 is about research methodology that explains the method used by the researcher related to the data and analysis, research setting, participants, instrument, data validity, data analysis, and also research ethical consideration of this research.

Chapter 4. This chapter presents the results of the discussion which have been analyzed by the researcher in the research methodology

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<sup>7</sup> Derald Wing, S., *Multicultural Sosial Work Practice*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2006.

<sup>8</sup> James Patrick Barber, Doctoral Dissertation: “*Integration of Learning: Meaning Making for Undergraduates through Connection, Application, and Synthesis*” (Michigan: The University of Michigan), 2009.

Chapter 5. This chapter is about the summary of findings and the whole argument of this research as well as the content limitations.

