

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

Indonesia's education character, especially in English Language Teaching (ELT), has only focused on teaching language structures, grammar, vocabulary, and other theories but forgets the cultural elements of language to be negotiated.¹ Whereas if we teach a language without teaching the culture of the language, our teaching becomes meaningless, or what we teach can be misleading.² For this reason, English teachers must be able to associate concepts and describe the classification of several cultures before adapting or adopting culture into learning materials.³ Cultural ignorance will cause confusion, misunderstanding, and even laughter for native speakers.⁴ In this case, learning cultures will become necessary. Although currently, the purpose of ELT is not only to imitate native speakers in speaking but to manifest students' expertise in intercultural proficiency so that use in the context of intercultural communication.⁵ Following the ministry of education and culture, it has been explained that the scope of English teaching materials includes social and cultural teaching. Furthermore, they emphasized that the character values of Indonesian culture are more highlighted.⁶

There are three aspects that influence cultural teaching in the language learning process: teacher, curriculum, and textbook.⁷

¹ Muhammad Mujtaba Mitra Zuana, "Involving Culture in English Language Learning," *Nidhomul Haq: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 2, no. 1 (2017): 46–52.

² Cynthia Douglas, "Culturally Responsive Lesson Plans by English Language Learners from the Eastern Highlands of Papua New Guinea," *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Perspectives in Higher Education* 2 (2017): 9–24, www.jimphe.com.

³ Zukhairatunniswah Prayati et al., "Developing Culture-Based English Instructional Materials to Improve Students' Thinking, ELT Achievement, and Classroom Interaction," *Lingua Cultura* 14, no. 2 (2020): 211–18, <https://doi.org/10.21512/lc.v14i2.6650>.

⁴ Zuana, "Involving Culture in English Language Learning."

⁵ Ragil Safitri and Sugirin, "Senior High School Students' Attitudes towards Intercultural Insertion into the ELT: Yogyakarta Context," *EduLite: Journal of English Education, Literature and Culture* 4, no. 2 (2019): 261, <https://doi.org/10.30659/e.4.2.261-274>.

⁶ KEMENDIKBUD, "Pedoman Guru Mata Pelajaran Bahasa Inggris," *Pusat Kurikulum Dan Perbukuan Badan Penelitian Dan Pengembangan Kementerian Pendidikan Dan Kebudayaan*, 2014, 1–103.

⁷ Imam Santosa, "Cultural Manifestation in an Electronic EFL Textbook For Senior High School," *Journal of English Language and Culture* 10, no. 1 (2019): 10–20, <https://doi.org/10.30813/jelc.v10i1.1904>.

While, the education curriculum in Indonesia has taught a lot about Indonesian cultural values through almost all subjects, which is a form of effort informing the nation's character. However, in the context of cross-cultural understanding, the cultural values taught must be balanced. For example, in studying English, students should explore the culture of English and their own culture. Furthermore, language is a system of signs seen as having a cultural value.⁸ Speakers identify themselves and their environment through the language used; they believe that language symbolizes their identity. Therefore, communicative competence requires a diversity of cultural understanding and the role of second languages and foreign languages in the development.⁹ The statement matches the vision and the circumstance of Indonesia's education curriculum that is familiar with diversity and highlights Indonesian culture in international relations. Nevertheless, we should not be selfish just to be known by other nations. We should not use our culture to treat other nations, and it could be that our culture is considered disrespectful by the culture of other nations. For example, Javanese people are okay to eat by hand, while westerners have a reasonably complex table manner. Therefore, cross-cultural understanding is needed to sustain harmony.

English has long been a compulsory subject in the Indonesian education curriculum. However, the length of time does not guarantee the student's interest in learning it. Many students consider that English is difficult to learn¹⁰; simultaneously, they have learned several foreign languages quickly, such as Arabic, Korean, Japanese, and others. Some of the reasons that affect students' lack of interest in learning English are teachers, methods, and environments.¹¹ The teacher's attitude to his students can determine the student's

⁸ Rosina Fransisca J. Lekawael, - Emzir, and Zainal Rafli, "The Cultural Values in Texts of English Coursebooks for Junior High School in Ambon, Moluccas-Indonesia," *Advances in Language and Literary Studies* 9, no. 2 (2018): 24, <https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.all.v.9n.2p.24>.

⁹ Shu-Feng Tseng, "International Journal of Liberal Arts and Social Science ISSN: 2307-924X Wwww.Ijlass.Org The Importance of Culture in Language Learning," *International Journal of Liberal Arts and Social Science*, vol. 7, 2019, www.ijlass.org.

¹⁰ Manuel E Caingcoy, "Journal of World Englishes and Educational Practices (JWEEP) Research Capability of Teachers: Its Correlates, Determinants and Implications for Continuing Professional Development," no. 541 (2021): 1–9, <https://doi.org/10.32996/jweep>.

¹¹ Addisu Sewbihon Getie, "Factors Affecting the Attitudes of Students towards Learning English as a Foreign Language," *Cogent Education* 7, no. 1 (2020): 0–37, <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2020.1738184>.

learning interests. If the teacher gives a less pleasant impression on students, then students will become lazy to follow the learning and vice versa. In addition, the methods used by teachers will also determine students' interest in English lessons. Today, access to learning English is wide open. Students can learn English through movies, books, songs, or games. Hence, in this context, teachers should be able to imply a little knowledge about cultures into the learning process, especially the culture that has long been carried out by the students' learning environment. So that students can better understand and engage in any English material that is ostensibly like providing cultural trivia.

Several previous researchers have explored the value of culture in English language teaching. For example, the research conducted by Dian Ratnasari about the importance of cross-cultural understanding (CCU) for foreign learners explores the importance of learning CCU.¹² The research conducted by Zarina Yahya on developing the local culture in ELT by using a reading program called "your language my culture" aims to upgrade English proficiency and local cultural awareness.¹³ In comparison, research conducted by Tsmratul'aeni that analyzes the cultural value in children's songs produces technical options in cultural teaching into the English learning process.¹⁴ In addition, research on cultural value in textbooks was also conducted by Zainal Rafli entitled "the cultural values in text English coursebooks for junior high school."¹⁵ The research discovered differences in cultural values between western and local cultures in textbooks. Recently another study on the value of culture in textbooks has also been conducted by Mahnaz Mostafaei Alaei; the study contains how local English textbooks

¹² Dian Ratnasari, "The Importance of Cross-Cultural Understanding in Foreign Language Teaching in the Asian Context," *Bahasa Dan Seni: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, Seni, Dan Pengajarannya* 46, no. 2 (2019): 124–31, <https://doi.org/10.17977/um015v46i22018p124>.

¹³ Zarina Yahya, Zawiah, Ibrahim, Noraini, Ramli, Rashila, Yusof, Noraina MD, Othman, "Your Language My Culture," *Kajian Malaysia* 35, no. 2 (2017): 39–66.

¹⁴ Tsmratul'aeni Tsmratul'aeni, "The Cultural Values Analysis of English Kids' Songs At K-Apel Makassar," *IDEAS: Journal on English Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature* 6, no. 2 (2018): 43–48, <https://doi.org/10.24256/ideas.v6i2.513>.

¹⁵ J. Lekawael, Emzir, and Rafli, "The Cultural Values in Texts of English Coursebooks for Junior High School in Ambon, Moluccas-Indonesia."

differ from international English textbooks.¹⁶ Those researchs are different but still equally discuss the value of culture in English language teaching.

The studies above show a wide range of information about the cultural values in English language teaching, but still focus more on students and their learning materials. Therefore, the researcher will focus on the teacher's perspective on cross-cultural understanding and how teachers describe, represent, and express culture in their teaching material during the learning process in the classroom. Furthermore, it aims to better understand cross-cultural communication without problems or obstacles. Because the lack of cultural knowledge has led to many misconceptions until now, for example, the term “pounds” in British means currency but for Americans it means weight. Other cases can be more dangerous and may offend native speakers and foreigners. Thus, along with the research, the researcher expects to understand cultural values in every English learning process for students and teachers to increase cross-cultural awareness later.

B. Research Focus and Scope

The focus of the research is the limitation of the problem that contains subject matter, which is still general as a research area. Based on the details above, the focus of the investigation is exploring cross-cultural understanding in ELT classroom: Negotiating Cultural Values by Teachers

C. Research Problems

Based on the background above, the formulas of the problem in this study are:

1. What is the teachers' perspective about CCU?
2. How does teacher negotiate their cultural understanding in the English language classroom?

D. Research Objectives

Based on the research problems above, the goals of the study are:

1. To find out what teachers know about cross-cultural understanding

¹⁶ Mahnaz Mostafaei Alaei and Hossein Parsazadeh, “The Emergence of a Purpose-Specific Model: Culture in English Language Textbooks,” *Intercultural Education* 32, no. 5 (2021): 547–61, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14675986.2021.1878111>.

2. To find out how teachers negotiate their cultural understanding in the English language classroom

E. Research Significances

1. Theoretical Significances

This research is expected to contribute knowledge to educational practitioners in understanding the role of culture in English language learning.

2. Practical Significances

a. For students

- 1) Gain a knowledge about cross-cultural understanding
- 2) Understand the correct situation and conditions in the application of culture

b. For teachers

- 1) It will usable as a source to improve understanding of the importance of cultural teaching in English language learning
- 2) Gain a knowledge of cross-cultural understanding in English language teaching

F. Definition of Key Terms

Operational definitions are intended to assist researchers in describing the concepts and variables studied so that data collection can be right on target, the inclusion of operational definitions are intended to unify understanding between researchers and readers. The operational definition is not a definition of all the words in the title, nor is it a theoretical definition from several sources and previous research, but it is a definition that is used by researchers. Operational definition which can be stated as follows:

1. Cross-cultural understanding is understanding about cultural diversity.
2. Cultural value is characteristic or identity that is inherent in a nation.

G. Organization of Thesis

To make it easier to understand problems to be discussed, the researcher will arrange systematics research writing consisting of five chapters, and each chapter is arranged in detail and systematically.

The first part is an introduction. The initial part consists of several parts, including: title page, approval page, declaration, abstract, *abstrak*, motto, dedication page, acknowledgements,

preface, and table of contents. As for systematics, the discussion and writing are as follows:

- CHAPTER I: This chapter contains introduction in general. Introduction part consists of research background, research focus and scope, research problems, research objectives, research significances, definition key of terms, and organization of thesis.
- CHAPTER II: This chapter contains review of related literature. This chapter includes: theoretical description, theoretical framework, and review of previous study.
- CHAPTER III: This chapter contains research methodology. This chapter comprises the following section: research method, research setting, research subjects, instruments and data collection technique, research data validity, data analysis technique, research ethical considerations.
- CHAPTER IV: This chapter presents research findings and discussion, which have been analyzed ways justified in the methodology. There are two major sections in this chapter: research results and discussion.
- CHAPTER V: This chapter contains conclusions and recommendations. In this chapter, writer will explain conclusion and recommendations which related to the problems.