

Chapter One

Introduction

This chapter presented the research introduction, including background of the study, identification, and delimitation of the problem. These are research question, purpose of the study, and significances of the study. This section is in the form of description in general statement.

Background of the Study

English is the most used language in the world. There are some versions of English, including British, American, Australian, etc. However, it is necessary to know that the language is part of a foreign culture, which is different from eastern culture. Besides, religion is the biggest factor that becomes arbiter. Although Muslim communities exist in America, Australian etc, they do not represent the culture of English universally.

Learning English has its advantages. In addition to being able to speak with the language, students of the English language can also know about the cultures of other countries. Language is not only about the alphabet, sentences, or communication, but it is also related with the culture of the world. Culture is needed in language education (Tajeddin & Teimournezhad, 2014). English can be a media in international communication; It can be used as a media of communication in many cultural and cross-cultural concepts (Prodromou, 2014). If a language learner travels to other country, then can use English to communicate with the people there. In addition, they can also know about the culture in that country.

English as Foreign Language (EFL) is not only about just learning the language but also includes learning culture, because language is a part of culture. Language and culture are something that is bound and cannot be separated. By learning a foreign language, you will also indirectly study the culture that deals with the language. When learning English, people cannot just speak English well, or write a paper in English, but also can explore other culture through learning English. The learning process of learning a second language or foreign languages not only require someone to practice what has been learned both in terms of linguistics, but also to know the culture behind the language to interpret intercultural communication (Ali, Kazemian, & Mahar, 2015). Learning culture in English as a foreign language class is important because culture is a factor that permeates all aspects of language, and language itself piles up a lot cultural sediment in history (Zhan, 2016). In Indonesia, there are standards in treating other people. If that person is older, then you must be polite and respect him or her. Meanwhile, in England, they treat people. It does not matter if she or he older or younger, they just think that everyone is same.

Culture is unlimited. It exists in the language, but it also exists in the art, mythology, values, habit and etiquette of the country (Oaster, 2017). Communication is important in language and culture. We can learn many things from culture. Culture cannot be differentiated from universal human nature and unique individual personality. Culture can involve the socio-cultural aspects, race, and ethnics of every country. Culture also can be identified from a person's identity. In additon, culture can be learned by people. Most Indonesian people are Muslim. This fact means that Indonesian culture is influenced by Islamic teaching. Because of this, adopting foreign culture in this situation is difficult.

Communication is like transportation: language is the vehicle and culture is the traffic light. According to Jiang (2000), language makes communication easier and faster; culture regulates, sometimes promotes and sometimes hinders communication. Jiang also stated that every form of language that we use have meaning, it is possible that something has a different meaning when it is associated with culture, as culture is much wider than language (Jiang, 2000). That is the reason why learning culture is also important in language learning, including in an English as a Foreign language class. Language learning is inseparable from understanding culture in its other manifestations.

Every teacher has strategies and methods to teach culture in the EFL class. For example, a teacher might compile a number of interesting topics to promote cultural learning. If there is no complete list, the topic that will be taught to students might not make them interested (Karam, 2017). No matter the cultural aspect is important in the learning process, the filter still wishes to understand it. Moreover, to organize Islamic society, the government created curriculum that includes Islamic Education as a subject. Islamic values also applied in the educational system. Islamic Education is one of things that is regulated in it. English learning also has to include Islamic materials. For example, in a text or passage of English about local culture, the student (who learns English) can develop negative perception toward western culture because the student has standard to rate bad or good the culture through their own culture. Of course, this condition makes a contradiction with cultural awareness in learning English as a foreign language.

In learning English, cultural awareness is a contributing factor that influences student understanding in learning English as foreign Language as explained above about the advantage of learning culture. For example, listening statements by native speakers, any reading of the

original text or book, any pictures of native speakers engaged in nature activities introduce cultural elements in the course.

Although the Islamic concept has influenced the educational system, many students want to improve their English skill through original source. This fact drove L2 learners in Indonesia to understand a foreign culture that should help students when using words and expressions more proficiently and authentically; to know the language level and fit the situation; act naturally recognize and accept differences with people from other cultures; respond and help speakers of other languages feel at home. Some students believe that cultural awareness is needed to limit in education. Others believe that learning native sources cannot be refused on learning process. Based on the explanation above, the researcher thinks that it is important to know student's perception toward cultural awareness as a contributing factor in learning English. Student perceptions are needed to know on the basis that the student as the object of the learning process.

Identification and Limitation of The Problem

The researcher has conducted initial interviews with some of these students. The researcher learned that some of the students feel the need to learn more about culture in the classroom. They believe that learning culture is a contributing factor in learning English. Another student also stated that learning culture give some benefit for learner who is learning a foreign language.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher thinks that it is important to know a student's perception toward cultural awareness as a contributing factor in learning English. Student perceptions important on the basis that the student is the object of the learning process.

The key point of this question is their understanding about the culture and foreign language acquisition.

After the researcher identified the problem, the researcher limited the problem. Firstly, this research delimits the research focus. There are two focuses of this research, namely students' perception about learning culture in English classes and the benefits of learning culture through English classes. Secondly, the research place is also limited, taking place only at private university in Yogyakarta. Thirdly, the researcher also limited the participants in that only five participants will be participating in this research. Finally, the only research method which is used in this study is qualitative method.

Research Questions

The research questions that guide the study are:

1. What are students' perceptions on how culture are taught in English class?
2. What are students' perceptions the benefit of learning culture in English classes?

Objectives of the Research

Based on the description above, the objectives of this research are:

1. To analyze the students' perceptions about culture in English classes.
2. To know students' perceptions about the benefits of learning culture in English classes.

Significance of The Study

This research is expected to provide benefits to the users of this research information. The benefits of this study are:

For researchers. This can be a useful source of information for their next research. This research can also add knowledge about learning culture through learning English.

For Students. This research can be provide an opportunity for students to enhancing their understanding about culture in learning English.

For Lecturer. This research will be useful to present a new knowledge to see the perception and understanding about culture and language in the classroom.

Organisation of The Chapter

Chapter one of this is called introduction which consists of the background of the study, identification of the problem and limitation of the problem, research questions, objective the research, significances of the study, and the outline of the research. Chapter two explains about literature review. This chapter explains about explore culture through learning English with related publications and works, and contains the conceptual framework. Chapter three focuses on the research methodology, mentioning the setting and participants of this research, data collection method, and data analysis. Chapter Four presents finding and discussion of the research. This chapter focuses on answering the two research questions which are posed by the researcher in this study. Finally, chapter five contains the conclusion and the suggestions of the research.

