

Articles

The implementation of multicultural-based English language teaching in a language institution

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| Article Information | Abstract |
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| <p>Keywords: Culture Multiculturalism Multicultural-based English language teaching</p> <p>Received 7 February 2022 Received in revised form 2 May 2022 Accepted 13 June 2022 doi: 10.33750/ijhi.v5i2.150</p> | <p>This research aims to explore how teachers implement multicultural-based English language teaching in a language institution and students' views of teachers' implementation of multicultural-based English language teaching. This research is qualitative with a case study design. In collecting the data, the researcher used direct observation by observing teaching and learning processes to find teachers implementing multicultural-based English language teaching and semi-structured interviews to explore the students' views. There are two main points of the findings of this study: 1) there are four dimensions of multicultural education exist in the teachers' implementation of multicultural-based English language teaching: content integration, knowledge construction process, prejudice reduction, and equity pedagogy; 2) Students have positive views toward the teachers' implementation of multicultural-based English language teaching. Thus, the researcher concluded that teachers and students have positive views towards implementing multicultural-based English language teaching, and teachers have been implementing multicultural-based English language teaching in their classes. Furthermore, similar studies in the future are better to discuss the implementation of multicultural-based English language teaching using other approaches or other theories to analyze different parts of it.</p> |

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1. Introduction

It is well-known that Indonesia is a bilingual and multicultural nation. Indonesia's linguistic and cultural diversity presents instructors with a problem when interacting with pupils from diverse backgrounds. Aspects of student diversity include culture, religion, native language, race, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, family composition, gender, prior experience, and skill level (Copple, 2003). Particularly, dealing with "diverse" students – linguistically, socially, and culturally (de Abreu & Hale, 2014) – creates problems for standard teaching practice (Gorgorio & Planas, 2001).

In the context of teaching and learning English as a foreign language (EFL), cultural diversity and student backgrounds often contribute to challenges as a unit. The challenges encountered by English teachers in the learning

process with multicultural students included difficulties in learning due to the influence of L1, students gathering in their ethnic circle, comprehension problems, disrespectful students, motivational issues, teaching difficulties, and classroom management issues (Kustati et al., 2020). Language and culture are connected; language is a component of a culture, and culture is a part of the language. This is the underlying concept of EFL instruction. Consequently, teachers as language practitioners must be multicultural advocates.

The need of educating pupils about culture stems from the fact that cultural misunderstandings lead to many issues in the actual world. However, teaching a classroom full of multilingual and multicultural pupils is not as simple as tossing a coin. The interaction involved in the teaching-learning process includes "the teacher's involvement, peer relationships, learning methods, resources, administration of

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classroom space, etc" (Garrote, 2014). According to Setyono and Widodo (2019), English instructors must be inventive when teaching multicultural features and use multimodal resources to engage students in culturally weighted language learning activities. Teachers must comprehend this in order to accept all pupils and allow them to express themselves in accordance with their cultural background.

Sudartini (2009) did study on multicultural English language instruction as a means of preserving national identity. The study's findings revealed the following three findings:

- The teaching of English as a second language in Indonesia has adopted western cultural attitudes and standards.
- Multicultural education enables all students, regardless of gender, ethnicity, race, culture, social class, religion, or exceptionality, to have an equal opportunity to gain experience at school.
- By applying a multicultural perspective to English language teaching, students will acquire the attitudes, knowledge, and skills necessary to successfully function within their micro-culture, mainstream culture, and global community.

The aforementioned research demonstrates the significance of multicultural-based English language instruction, which serves not only as a skill-acquisition strategy for students, but also to preserve students' understanding of their own culture and prevent the development of a new semantic frame toward their own culture. Therefore, it is the responsibility of educators to instruct and educate students to accept cultural conflicts, appreciate cultural variety, avoid stereotyping others, and provide cross-cultural resources.

In the case of language institutions, which focuses on English Language Teaching, the teachers are professional teaching staff who have graduated from university and have attended the particular training. They are not only trained to teach English to Indonesians, but they also used to pursue students with different national and cultural backgrounds. Thus, they are expected to have understood multicultural values since the students are from public and private schools and have different cultural and family backgrounds. However, in teaching practice, teachers do not clearly understand how to implement multicultural values in teaching English. This is based on the results of the researcher's preliminary observations in an English class for immigrants taught by one of the teachers. According to Kardina (2016), there are two reasons why instructors did not see culture as a significant aspect of language instruction: either they were unaware that culture should be included into the teaching of English, or they lacked the knowledge and/or skills to teach the culture as part of their classroom materials.

Many researchers have studied how to integrate culture in English language teaching, such as the study conducted by Luk (2012), which studied culture and language teaching from twelve secondary schools' English teachers in Hong Kong, including native and non-native English teachers. Another study by Czura (2016) and Kustati *et al.* (2020) investigated the student teachers' views of ICC in a Second

Language (L2) classroom and examined whether their attitudes are affected by their major. These studies are different from the present study that the researchers conducted in terms of the objectives and the subjects of the study. The present study tried to explore how the teachers perceive and implement multicultural-based English language teaching particularly the teachers who have been teaching English in language institutions and how students perceive the teachers' implementation of multicultural-based English language teaching.

Another research conducted by Suwandari (2019) about junior high school teachers' views of multiculturalism in English language teaching revealed that the teacher's views are quite comprehensive, and he can implement the concepts and views of multiculturalism in his teaching. This study is phenomenological research which employs progressive qualitative method and uses interview, classroom observation (observation notes) and document check as data collection technique. Although this study is quite similar to the present study, but the study is slightly different in terms of the research method and the data collection technique. The present study employed a qualitative method with a case study design and use interview and observation (observation checklist) to collect the data needed. Therefore, the present study provided comprehensible explanation on the implementation of multicultural-based English language teaching both from students and teachers' perspective.

This research aims to give descriptive account of:

- Teachers' implementation of multicultural-based English language teaching in a language institution in Makassar
- Students' views on the teachers' implementation of multicultural-based English language teaching.

2. Method

2.1. Research Design

This research was carried out through qualitative method with a case study design based on Tomaszewky, Zarestsky, and Gonzales (2020) which explains that the qualitative research values people's live experiences. Tomaszewky *et al* (2020) further explains that a case study describes case to develop an in-depth understanding of the context of specific case.

2.2. Setting and Participants

This research was conducted from March 2022 to April 2022 in a private language institution in Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. The research participants of this study are teachers and students. The purposive sampling technique was employed to determine the participants. There were four students interviewed, and four classes were under observation.

2.3. Research Instrument

2.3.1 Observation checklist

Observation emphasizes understanding the natural environment as lived by participants without altering or manipulating it. The researcher applied nonparticipant observation. Gay *et al.* (2019) assumes that in

nonparticipation observation the researcher is not directly involved in the situation being observed. In doing the observation, the researcher used observation checklist which is a list of things that is going to look at when observing a class. The criterion of the observation checklist is based on Banks's (1997) five dimension of multicultural education practice that has been discussed in the review of related literature.

2.3.2. Interview guide

In this study, the researcher interviewed students to get data about students' views of the teachers' implementation of multicultural-based English language teaching. The researcher informed the interviewee to state their opinion freely. Thus, the researcher used the interview guide by Wilson (2014).

2.4 Technique of Data Analysis

In analyzing data from classroom observation and interviews, the researcher used qualitative data analysis based on Braun and Clarke (2006) thematic analysis model, which is the most common in a qualitative study to explore interviewee's responses particularly. The thematic analysis identifies, analyzes, and reports pattern themes within data. There are six stages in analyzing the data using thematic analysis: familiarization with the data, generating initial code, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report.

3. Results

3.1. Teachers' implementation of Multicultural-based English Language Teaching in a Language Institution in Makassar

This part performed the observation findings of teachers' implementation of multicultural-based English language teaching. The table below shows the observation findings based on four dimensions of multicultural education. Based on Table 1, it can be seen that for content integration, only T1 used students' cultural materials and all of the teachers used teaching materials based on the culture of English-speaking country.

Table 1. Teachers' implementation of Multicultural-based English Language Teaching

| No | Dimensions | Criterion | Teachers |
|----|--------------------------------|--|----------------|
| 1. | Content Integration | The teacher uses students' cultural materials | T1 |
| | | The teacher uses teaching materials based on the culture of English-speaking country | T1, T2, T3, T4 |
| | | The teacher uses teaching materials from a variety of cultures in English and non-English speaking countries | |
| 2. | Knowledge construction process | The teacher gives the students some questions | T1, T2 |
| | | The teacher explains the lesson (consider the cultural identities and social position, | T1, T2, T3, T4 |

| | | | |
|----|---------------------|---|----------------|
| | | such as values, relationships, personal history, and beliefs) | |
| | | The teacher concludes the lesson | |
| 3. | Prejudice Reduction | The teacher allows students to work in pairs | T1, T2 |
| | | The teacher allows students to work in a group (which consists of different cultural backgrounds) | |
| | | Teacher asks his/her students to apologize whenever they misbehave | |
| | | Teacher gives reward with different expressions | T1, T2, T3, T4 |
| | | The teacher responds to students' thanks | T1 |
| 4. | Equity Pedagogy | The teacher uses a different teaching method | T1, T2, T4 |

However, they were not taught using materials from various cultures in English and non-English speaking countries. For the second dimension, the knowledge construction process, teachers who gave students some questions were only done by T1 and T2. All teachers explained the lesson (consider the cultural identities and social position, such as values, relationships, personal history, and beliefs), and no teacher concluded the lesson.

In the third dimension, prejudice reduction, teachers who applied paired work were only T1 and T2, and no teacher allowed students to work in a group (consisting of different cultural backgrounds). Besides, no teacher asked his/her students to apologize whenever they misbehaved. The table also shows that all teachers gave rewards with different expressions, and only T1 responded to students' thanks. The fourth dimension, Equity pedagogy, had only three teachers who used different teaching methods (T1, T2, and T4).

3.2. Students' Views of the Teachers' Implementation of Multicultural-based English Language Teaching in a Language Institution in Makassar

This part illustrated some extracts of the interview of students to find out the students' views on the teachers' implementation of multicultural-based English language teaching. Students are symbolized as S and number after S is based on students' list name

3.3.1. The Use of Different Kinds of Material in Teaching English

Extract 1:

S1: *menurut saya, sah-sah saja. Mungkin lebih memudahkan antara guru dan murid, apa yang mungkin kita tidak tahu bisa cari disitu. So it's important. In my opinion, it's fine, maybe it facilitates both teachers and students, something that we don't know, we can find it from the resources. so it's important.*

S2: *I think it's a good idea because it's more fun when teachers use more materials. The class is not boring and also we can know facts, some random facts, or fun fact that we don't really know.*

S3: *I think it's good because I know other traditions in other countries.*

S4: ... we use the video and I think it's really great because I can learn many things from that not only from my book.

Based on the extract 1 above, it shows that all students enjoy when their teachers use different kinds of material in teaching English. They think that using different kinds of materials in teaching can broaden their knowledge and gain more insight. The use of different materials can facilitate teachers and students to discover new things from various sources. In addition, students also believe that by using different materials the class will be more fun.

3.3.2. The use of Multicultural materials, concepts, and values in teaching

Extract 2:

S1: *tidak masalah, kita bisa mengetahui budaya lain (no problem, we can know other cultures)*

S2: *it's cool. I really like to hear something like that, like story or something like that.*

S3: *it's good*

S4: *I think it helps me to know many things about another country not only Indonesia.*

Based on the extract 2 above, it shows that students agreed if teachers use multicultural materials, concepts and values in teaching. The students think that implementing multicultural materials, concepts, and values in the classroom help them to know many things not only other places in Indonesia but also other countries outside of Indonesia. Students can know the cultural things, lifestyles, and so on.

3.3.3. Kinds of materials, concepts, and values that the teacher integrated in the classroom

Extract 3:

S2: *alright, he told us like researching.*

S2: *Yes on the internet maybe also reading book.*

S2: *what I found is something about culture, how they eat, meet each other, how they have cultural ceremony.*

Based on the extract 3 above, it shows S2 searched on the internet to find out something about cultures and also read a book. It is easier for us to access existing information from the internet so that it can be used as a means of teaching. Students can find the information they need related to the lesson to increase their insight and knowledge just like what S2 does, she uses the internet to find out about cultural ceremonies in a certain place.

Extract 4:

S3: *like in videos, stories like animal. So, I can understand the meaning of a term.*

Based on extract 4 above, S3 experienced multicultural materials like videos and stories about animal. S3 thought that it can help her to understand the meaning of a certain word. Using learning media such as videos and stories can help children understand a word or term contextually so that it can minimize errors in use, besides that the learning process was also be more fun for students.

Extract 5:

S4: *yes, we have like a little bit in the first meeting we learned about famous people. She explained about the singer, where she came from and how about the culture in her country like that.*

Based on the extract 5 above, teacher in S4's class used pictures to help students explained singers from different countries and the cultures that they have in their countries. Using pictures in teaching is one strategy that can be used to implement culture-based English teaching. By showing pictures from different cultural backgrounds, it will make it easier for students to understand the diversity that is around us.

3.3.4. Students' opinion on the teacher Integration of Multicultural materials

Extract 6:

S1: *yes, very important*

S2: *yes, I think it's important, because it can preserve culture.*

S3: *yes, it's important*

S4: *... it makes our class more fun, because sometimes I am bored if we only learn from the book*

Based on the extract 6 above, it shows that S1, S2, and S3 think that integrating multicultural material in English language teaching is very important because it helps them to experience fun classes and preserve cultures. They can feel a pleasant atmosphere when the teacher is able to integrate multicultural material in teaching and they can gain a lot of knowledge, especially about other cultures that exist.

4. Discussion

This part deals with the interpretation of findings about the implementation of multicultural-based English language teaching in a language institution in Makassar. There are two parts in this section based on the problem statement: 1) teachers' implementation of multicultural-based English language teaching in a language institution in Makassar; 2) students' views on the teachers' implementation of multicultural-based English language teaching.

The first finding of this research is the teachers' implementation of multicultural-based English language teaching which was taken from the observation. From the observation, the researcher found out that for the content integration, most teachers use teaching materials based on the culture of English-speaking country because mostly they used materials from textbook that was already provided from the institution which was published by English speaking country. Based on this finding, the researcher claims that teachers mostly used target cultural materials which are based on the culture of English-speaking countries. This is in line with Cortazzi *et al.* (1999) who identified three types of cultural information that can be used as English teaching materials. These are source cultural materials, target culture materials, and international cultural materials.

The second dimension, knowledge construction process, the researcher found teachers gave the students some question, and explained the lesson (consider the cultural identities, and social position such as values, relationship, personal history and beliefs). On the other hand, teachers did

not make conclusion of the lesson because they directly give the students Story-time session. Banks (1996) stated that the knowledge construction process describes how teachers help students to understand, investigate, and determine how the biases, frames of reference, and perspectives within a discipline influence the ways in which knowledge is constructed within it.

The third dimension, prejudice reduction, there are some criterion that existed during the observation: 1) teachers allowed students working in pairs to practice conversation; 2) teachers gave reward with different expressions such as "good", "very good", and "great"; 3) teachers responded to students' thanks, however there was only one teacher who did this because the students did not say "thanks" to the teachers.

The fourth dimension, Equity pedagogy, exists when teachers modify their teaching in ways that will facilitate the academic achievement of students from diverse racial, cultural, and social-class groups (Banks & Banks, 1995). This is in line with the finding of the observation where the teachers used different teaching method such as role-play, individual task, and question and answer.

Therefore, based on the explanation above, the researcher concludes that the teachers have been implementing multicultural-based English language teaching in the classroom since the dimensions of multicultural education based on Banks (1997) exist in the teaching and learning process, even though they were not fulfilling all the criterion.

The second finding is the students' views on the teachers' implementation of multicultural-based English language teaching. The data obtained through the interview of four different levels of students. There are three things that the researcher found from the interview. The first is students enjoy when their teachers use different kinds of material in teaching English. They think that using different kinds of materials in teaching can broaden their knowledge and gain more insight. The second is students agreed if teachers use multicultural materials, concepts and values in teaching. The students think that implementing multicultural materials, concepts, and values in the classroom help them to know many things. This is related to what Yuso *et al* (2020) found that students think that culture cannot be separated in language learning and learning culture is an attraction that can make students learn English more effectively.

The third is there are some kinds of materials, concepts, and values that the teachers integrate in the classroom such as: a) using internet and reading book to find out something about cultures; b) using video and story about animal to understand the meaning of a certain word; c) using pictures to describe singers from different countries and the culture that they have in their countries. The last thing that the researcher found that students perceived it is especially important to integrate multicultural materials because it helps them to experience fun classes and preserve cultures.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher concludes students have positive views toward the teachers' implementation of multicultural-based English language teaching. Icekson and Pines (2003) defined positive views as a certain affirmation that tends to highlight the positive and constructive rather than the pessimistic.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion on previous section there are several conclusions withdraw. First, the teachers of have been implementing multicultural-based English language teaching in the classroom since the dimensions of multicultural education based on Banks (1997) are exist during the observation. There are four dimensions exist from the observation 1) content integration, 2) knowledge construction process, 3) prejudice reduction, and 4) equity pedagogy. These findings reinforced by the results of interviews that support the results of observations. The second, students of have positive views toward the teachers' implementation of multicultural-based English language teaching.

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