

Chapter One

Introduction

This chapter had each headings which had been discussed explicitly. The heading consisted of the background of the study, formulation of the problem, limitation of the problem, the purposes of the study, the significance of the study. At the beginning, the trend of issue related to this research had been generated. Some of the problems were formulated and limited in the research in order to researcher concerns to the specific problem. Moreover, this study needed specified the research question so that it had an understandable goal. In addition, the research is also written to classify the significant benefit.

Background of the Study

Study of culture in teaching has been discussed in recent decades (Yeganeh, & Raeesi, 2015). Teaching culture is an interesting topic to be discussed because it related to the context of life. Teaching culture also is important part of language learning because it can reduce misconceptions that occurred in various cultures, and teaching culture also enriches level of understanding of the similarities and differences of culture. Those explanations are related to what Agar (1994) explained that culture is part of the language and language is the component of culture.

In teaching and learning foreign language, cultural difference is necessary to know in order to understand cultural diversity, for instance criticality. Criticality in this research tends to the way to express criticism. In the United Stated of America, criticism is considered as healthy discussion, if it is expressed

directly. However in Japan, criticism is expressed indirectly. These showed that there is a difference of belief in certain of culture. In addition Brown (2000) said that “belief, ideas, customs, skills, arts, and tools are elements of culture that characterized in group of people in a given period of time” (p. 177). Furthermore, teaching culture in English as a foreign language classroom can perform how culture may value the same thing differently (Brown, 2011).

Language is always related to culture. The existence of culture is applied in English as a foreign language teaching classroom. Teaching language without culture would lead to misunderstand and even can lead to conflict. Teaching language is showed by different style of language from different culture for instance in delivering expression in daily life context. If this cannot be understood by any parties, the communication is not created properly. Another existence of culture becomes more important because basically, culture practiced is mainly through language. In relation with existence of cultural awareness in EFL, Brown (2011) said that it is as a total way of life of particular groups of people that understand the differences of people say, think, do and make. Cultural awareness is also a bridge among the culture of target language learners and the culture of language being studied. As mentioned ahead, language is the carrier of culture that transmits positive impacts to teaching culture in the classroom (Ying, 2013).

Teaching culture helped cultivate cultural awareness, especially in the English as a foreign language classroom. To cultivate cultural awareness, people need to respect each other, to assimilate the essence from each other, and to observe practical performance (Ying, 2013). Moreover, Ying said that respecting

each other in different culture is needed by understanding other culture and own culture to achieve better communication and cooperation opportunities. In addition assimilating each other in learning culture reflects to understand of native culture objectively and maintain own cultural characteristics, and observing to the practical performance teaching culture awareness is related to look at the condition of teaching culture in current situation (Ying, 2013).

Cultural awareness is also related to students as an object in teaching process. Through teaching cultural awareness, the students can understand the fact that all people exhibit culturally-conditioned behaviours, and students become more aware of conventional behaviour in common situations in the target culture. Moreover teaching culture can increase their awareness of the cultural connotations of words and phrases in the target language. Additionally, cultural awareness can help student to understand how culture works properly.

Cultural awareness is the term that describes responsiveness to the impact cultural-induced behaviour both language and communication usage (Tomalin, & Stempleski, 2013). The impact of cultural-induced enriched the understanding between own culture and other culture that build positive interest to know more the similarities and differences of cultures. Tomlinson and Musuhara (2004) said that "Awareness can enlarge the mind, improve resistance and facilitate the communications" (p. 3). The appreciation of culture can give integrity and ability. Moreover it also enhanced cultural awareness that can help us to achieve cultural compassion and sense. Cultural awareness assisted the progress of language acquisition, empathetic and inquisitive. Cultural awareness

can also provide the optimal circumstances for language acquisition and exposure for language usage (Tomlinson & Musuhara, 2004).

In cultural awareness, there are cultural base that must be known. Cultural base are ideas, products and behaviours. Ideas made up of beliefs, values and Institution. Product consists of literature, folklore, art, music and artefacts. Moreover behaviours consists of custom, habits, dress, foods, leisure (Tomalin, & Stempleski, 2013). On the other hand, studying cultural awareness can motivate people to understand the relationship among language and culture. When studying culture and language, the people were gaining a lot of benefits. Some of the common benefits are; people are able to understand different cultural context, the people are able to respect to other culture, and the people able to get knowledge of a foreign language.

The simple case is about cultural awareness in the classroom, for instance when the teacher says “ I can’t hear myself think” , this expression is indication to their students that they should not speak too much and they should stop and be quite (Brown, 2011). As the learners may not understand about this expression and they still continue to talk. Hence, with this case, Brown stated that it is the essential to strengthen cultural awareness of students about what is being communicated.

The researcher observation also revealed some phenomena dealing with cultural awareness in teaching classroom. For example, when a lecturer in English Education Department of the Universitas of Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta taught English as a second language, their teaching sometimes were connected with both

language and culture. This can be known when lecturer described a language, and at the same time, they connected with their experience and knowledge about culture. The lecturer shared their experience to bring more information about cultural differences to students in the classroom. A wide range of cultural knowledge that they conveyed, ranging from language expression, daily interaction, behavior and even academic that has a clear distinction in our culture. In addition, lecturer still teaches how to appreciate another culture that has been taught in English as foreign language classroom.

Accordingly, learning language is always followed by culture. The culture of the language that student learned is very diverse, and how student appreciate their own culture and other culture is called cultural awareness. When integrating cultural awareness in teaching classroom, sometimes students were confused with many kinds of culture that were taught in the classroom. Furthermore, it became an issue for students in understanding the variations of culture in EFL teaching. Additionally, students' comprehension about cultural awareness in teaching classroom is limited, due to lack of knowledge about the benefits of teaching cultural awareness is received. Therefore, researcher wanted to know about the variations and benefits of cultural awareness in English as a foreign language teaching classroom.

Formulation of the Problem

Understanding a language involves not only knowledge of speaking such as grammar, phonology and lexis, but also certain features and characteristics of culture are considered (Cakir, 2006). Certain features of culture are custom,

clothing, religion, social rule and food. This indicated that culture is varied. Because culture is varied, there are some problems happened. Some of the problems are obtained by people, especially college students who are learning about cultural awareness in English as a foreign language. First, students assumed that they did not improve their cultural knowledge in the classroom because they did not know how to enhance their cultural content in English as a foreign language teaching classroom. Second, lack of information is received by student in integrating culture and language in English as foreign language classroom. Third, students' understanding of cultural awareness was not extensive, so they were not able to classify the variations and benefits of culture that taught in English as a foreign language classroom. Fourth, students' motivation and curiosity to cultural awareness was not appeared. Fifth, Student did not have progressive thinking in cultural awareness that is taught in English as a foreign language classroom.

Based on the problems associated with cultural awareness discussed above, the students should be taught cultural content in English as a foreign language classroom in order to students are sensitive to cultural difference. If students are already sensitive then they will not be shocked when they are dealing with the variation of culture. In addition, students should be taught more about culture in EFL, especially variations and benefits of their culture and others in order to better appreciate culture one another. In line with this problem, the researcher believed that those issues should be researched at EED of UMY.

Limitation of the Problem

Issues discussed in cultural awareness in English foreign language teaching classroom are mentioned on the preceding paragraphs. The researcher did not investigate all listed problems, but he concerns with classifying the variations of culture and benefits of cultural awareness in English as a foreign language teaching classroom at EED UMY of batch 2014. In addition, this can improve student's understanding in cultural awareness.

Research Question

There are two research questions to be examined in the study.

1. How is students' awareness of cultural variations in EFL classroom?
2. What are the benefits of cultural awareness to the student in EFL classroom?

The Purpose of the Study

With respect to the research question, this study aimed to find out students' awareness of cultural variations and students' perceptions on the benefit of cultural awareness in English as a foreign language teaching classroom in English Education Department at Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta.

Significance of the Study

The researcher assumed that this research is very important to conduct. The significant of research can be given at least five groups: teachers, other researchers researcher and institution.

Teachers

Teacher will get the information on students' awareness of cultural variations and benefits of cultural awareness. The information can be used in their following

teaching culture in English as a foreign language. Moreover this research also will help teachers' intercultural perspective such as perspective to adapt and to build relationship in the variety of cultural context that may have been impact on their language teaching methodology.

Other researchers

This research can be as a reference for other researchers who are attracted to conduct the same research regarding cultural awareness with adifferent context. Researcher provided this research to other researcher who wants to explore more research about cultural awareness.

Researcher

This study can enrich, enhance and expand the researchers' insights about culture awareness that is taught in the classroom. Besides the information about the similarities and differences of local and target culture are obtain by the researcher when conducting this study. This study will help researcher to know students' knowledge about variations and benefit of culture. Moreover this research can train researcher to solve the problem with challenging ideas. Furthermore, this study can be as a guideline when he will become a teacher.

Institution

This research can be beneficial for the institution to make a policy in a language teaching that involved culture therein. Certainly, this policy will give positive impact on students or teacher to acquire and explore their understanding of cultural awareness.

Outline of Study

This paper is divided into three chapters. Every chapter is arranged with different instruction. This study is begun from chapter one including background of the study, formulation of the problem, limitation of the problem, research question, the purpose of study, significance of the study, and outline of the study. Moreover the reason why the researcher interested with topic that is also revealed in chapter one. Chapter two is literature review including theoretical framework, related study, and conceptual framework. This chapter explained more about the theoris as foundation of this study. It contained the theoretical framework of cultural awareness in teaching, cultural variations and benefit, and definition of culture. Chapter three provided the method that the researcher used to conduct this study. Chapter four reported the data retrieved in finding and discussion. Then, the last chapter proposed the conclusion and recommendation of this study.

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