

The Benefits of Watching English Movie
towards EFL Students' Cross Cultural Understanding

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Abstract

Learning language and culture are something that cannot be separated. Everyone who are learning about language will also learn about culture. As the language learners, the students may get culture shock because of the culture differences. To minimize the culture shock, students need to have an understanding about the culture differences that can we called Cross Cultural Understanding (CCU). This study aims to find out the benefits of watching English movie towards EFL students' Cross Cultural Understanding (CCU). The objectives of this study were to explore the English Native speakers' cultural aspects from movies and to find the benefits of watching English movie. It was conducted in ELED of a private university in Yogyakarta involving three students of batch 2016. The criteria of the participants were about the students of ELED, have joined Listening and Speaking for Daily Conversation, Material Design, or Teaching English to Young Learners as the subject, and love to watch English movie. This research used qualitative descriptive under qualitative method to present the finding. Last but not least, the researcher conducted open-ended interview to gain the data. The research had two major findings. The first finding was about the English Native speakers' cultural aspects that students get from watching English movie. For the first aspect which is personalities, the researcher found discipline, hardworking, brave, individualist, on time, take risk, and have a leadership. As the second aspect which is daily activity, the researcher found that English native speakers are always have time for family, hardworking to their jobs, but mostly they don't know their neighbour. For the third aspect which was about national event, this research found Christmas, Halloween, Thanksgiving Day, and Easter. The second finding was about the benefits of

watching English movie. The researcher found three benefits; 1) get a knowledge about the culture and habit; 2) apply their good personality; and 3) learn how to respect the culture.

Keywords: Culture, cultural aspects, Cross Cultural Understanding, benefits of watching English movie

Background

Language is an important aspect for communication. Learning a language means learning the culture of the language. People cannot learn the language itself without learning the culture because both of them are a unity. Dobrovolskij and Piirainen (2006), Colson (2008) and Williams (2010) claimed that language is inseparable from its culture. Talking about culture, people may be familiar about Cross Cultural Understanding (CCU). Cross Cultural Understanding is a term to call an understanding about learning different culture. Sugirin (2009) stated that “Cross Cultural Understanding is the ability to recognize the culture differences, make correct interpretation and react properly to people or situations in the communication.” (p.2)

Cross Cultural Understanding is needed in language learning, especially in communication. Sinagatullin (2003) stated “The goal of training in cross- cultural understanding is to help students acquire attitudes, knowledge, and skills needed to successfully function within their own micro-culture, mainstream culture, and the global community.” (p. 114). There are many kinds of way to learn about Cross Cultural Understanding. People can learn it by visiting some places, asking someone’s culture, or maybe observing another’s habit. Besides, people also can learn from books, songs, or movies. In this study, movies become the concern to be elaborated by the researcher. As Mallinger and Rossy (2007) stated “Movies tell stories about people, their hopes, dreams challenges, and fears, how they relate to others, and what behaviors are socially acceptable” (p. 608).

As an English learner in Indonesia, the differences of the culture that are faced by students may become the problem as well. As we know that English in Indonesia becomes a foreign language (EFL). It means that Indonesian students learn English not as a second language, but as an additional learning. There are many aspects, especially about the culture differences itself. The students may feel that the culture differences is a barrier for them to learn English. Whereas, Yagi (1995) explained that cross cultural understanding is a common goal of foreign language teaching; however, conventional cultural lessons provide only a superficial, monolithic view of culture.

There are some ways to enhance students' knowledge about cross cultural understanding. One of the ways is by watching English movie, which become the concern of the researcher in this study. Cardon (2010) suggested that one of the primary benefits, particularly among university students, is that movies are entertaining, engaging, and in many cases stimulate curiosity toward other cultures. It is clearly explained by Cardon that movie may become a media that can bring us to the culture.

As the researcher's experiences, sometimes the lecturers in her department also use a movie as media of their teaching. The lecturers was using the movie as the topic discussion in the classroom. Some of the subjects that use movie were Listening and Speaking for Daily Conversation, Material Design, and Teaching English to Young Learners. Most of the subjects were not showing the whole of a movie, only some part of the movie. This can be one of the example of the use of movie in the class.

The Benefits of Watching English Movies

Watching movie is one of the popular activity that people usually do to spend their leisure time. Movie in all genres has many benefits for people such as entertain people with the story of the movie, improve people's imagination, and learn new culture from the movie.

Rarick (2007) stated “Many movies contain the ability to produce an emotional effect in addition to providing students with important aspects of culture.” (p.2) Moreover, Rarick explained that the use of movie can be a supplement to involve the culture studies that can be very beneficial as a learning device.

Nowadays, many language teachers use movie as a media in their teaching and learning. Movie seems to be an interesting media for the students to learn about culture. Yalcin (2013) said that movie films are windows into culture and it has rich source of cultural events. He also added “Movie films chosen for the purpose of learning or teaching a foreign or second language may enable us to observe varying patterns of human behaviors, including thoughts, beliefs, values, customs, courtesies, rituals, manners of interacting, etc.” (p.265) It is clearly stated that movie gives many cultural aspects that language learners need.

Watching movies can be something interesting for the students to observe the culture did by the actors. By watching the movies, the students can learn the culture differences between their culture and the English native’s culture. Later, the students will get the understanding on the culture differences and they will learn how to be tolerance to others. This kind of this is related to the knowledge of CCU.

Cross Cultural Understanding

Cross Cultural Understanding (CCU) is one of the knowledge that students learn from learning English. Even if this is not a new term, but there are some students who does not know about it. This research will help them to get the understanding about CCU by read some definition and also the aspect of it below.

The definition of Cross Cultural Understanding. Grant and Lei (2001) claim that cultural differences are the main issues in cross-cultural education. Without recognizing differences in traditions and habits among people of different ethnics, religions, localities, regions, and countries or nations, confusion and misunderstanding will continually recur in

communication with other communities (Sugirin, 2009). From this, people need something to solve the differences. By doing the cross cultural understanding, people may forget and accept another culture wisely. As Sugirin (2009) said that cross cultural understanding is the ability to recognize these differences, make correct interpretation and react properly to people or situations in the communication with these communities.

Furthermore, Sinagatullin (2003) stated that the goal of training in cross cultural understanding is to help students acquire attitudes, knowledge, and skills needed to successfully function within their own micro-culture, mainstream culture, and the global community. This way students will be able to obtain adequate knowledge, internalize attitudes, and develop skills needed to function appropriately in the culture at all levels: local, national, and global (Sugirin, 2009). Sinagatullin (2003) suggested that this goal would be achieved on the condition that all the students, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, race, culture, social class, religion, or exceptionality, have an equal opportunity to learn at school.

In conclusion, Cross Cultural Understanding (CCU) is a way to recognize the culture differences that appear in this world. People should learn about this to avoid several bad things related to the culture differences. Moreover, cross cultural understanding will make the peaceful condition in the area which have several different cultures. Because of there are so many aspects from culture itself, so the researcher will more focus in the context of the national event and the habit of the native speaker of the target language.

Cross Cultural Understanding from movies. In the teaching and learning process, there are many kind of media that can be used. Especially in learning cross cultural understanding, people can learn it by read a novel, travel to the target place, or watch a movie. In this study, the researcher is going to focus in movie. The knowledge of cross cultural understanding can be found in movie. People who watch a movie which is the movie has different culture with them, they will get the new knowledge about the other culture.

Adnyani (2011) mentioned that through watching the movies, the students may observe events, examples of cultural aspects, and people's way of life in certain community, how people express and react on particular situation, and relationship between people as well as the language spoken by the people. The cross cultural understanding can be learned when the students compared with the local culture.

Methodology

The researcher used qualitative method as the research method of this study. According to Creswell (2012), qualitative inquiry employs different philosophical perceptions, strategies of inquiry, and methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. In addition, the researcher chose qualitative descriptive as the researcher design. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2011), qualitative descriptive method is a qualitative data analysis which is divided into organizing, accounting, and exploring the data. The researcher considered the qualitative descriptive to be able to describe the students' experiences in watching English movies and their CCU will be the result of this study.

The researcher had chosen three participants from a private university in Yogyakarta. The data were collected by interview. Cohen, Manion and Morisson (2011) stated that "the interview is a flexible tool for data collection, enabling multisensory channels to be used: verbal and nonverbal, spoken and heard." The tools used to help the researcher collecting the data were an interview guideline, a notebook, and a voice recorder.

In order to get the data, the researcher had done several steps in the data collection procedures. Firstly, the researcher made the interview guideline. Secondly, the researcher contacted the participants via social media. After made an appointment with the participants, the researcher conducted the interview. The interview was using Bahasa and located in one of a private university in Yogyakarta.

Finding

Based on the interview, the researcher found several personalities that the participants got from watching English movie. There were hardworking, have good time management, discipline, brave to take risk, have a leadership, and independent. The second finding was about daily activity. The researcher found that from watching English movie, the students could observe the daily activities of the English native speakers for example always have time for family, doing the activity on time, and rare to have interaction with neighbour. The next finding was about the benefits of watching English movies. From the interview, the researcher found three benefits, there were getting knowledge about other culture and habit, applying their good personalities, and learning how to respect the culture differences.

Conclusion

Cross Cultural Understanding is needed for all the language learners. There are many ways to learn CCU. In this research, the researcher chose movie as the media to conduct the research. After did the interview, the researcher found that the students could observe the personalities of the English native speakers by watching movie. The personalities found by the participants were hardworking, have good time management, discipline, brave to take risk, have a leadership, and independent. Besides, the participants could also observe the daily activities of the English native speakers, there were always have time for family, doing the activity on time, and rare to have interaction with neighbour. In conclusion, there were some benefits that students can get from watching English movie. The students could getting knowledge about other culture and habit, applying their good personalities, and learning how to respect the culture differences.

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