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THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURE IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS FOREIGN LANGUAGE FOR TEACHERS IN BULELENG

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Abstract: The objective of this study is to determine the significance of culture in the teaching of English as a second language for teachers in Indonesia specifically in Buleleng regency. This study employs a blend of qualitative methodologies and library research. Specifically, one teacher from SD N 1 Kaliuntu serves as an informant to provide answers for the inquiry conducted in this research. The findings indicate that culture plays a crucial role in the instruction of English as a foreign language, as it can inspire students by demonstrating how the language is utilized in their home country. Teachers, as facilitators in education, are also responsible for incorporating culture into every instructional process. This ensures that students learn in alignment with the prevailing reality.

Keywords: Culture, Teaching English as Foreign Language, Teacher

INTRODUCTION

When people talk about language as a medium of communication, linguistics comes into play. Research into language and how languages are structured is known as linguistics. The field known as

"linguistics" investigates how languages work in general as well as their structure, semantics, and context-dependent usage (Marousek, 2015). Students of language study phonetics and phonology (the study of human speech sounds), morphology (the study

of words), syntax (the study of sentences), and semantics (the study of meaning) among other areas. As sociolinguists, linguists often think about the relationship between language and society (Deumert et al., 2001). Every aspect of our daily lives depends on our ability to communicate effectively. According to Deumert et al. (2001), language serves as a medium of communication that enables people to engage with society. People use language in different ways depending on their situation. Furthermore, during discussion, language allows speakers to convey their feelings and convey information to listeners (Liaw et al., 2013).

People from different parts of the world speak different languages and have different cultural traditions. Culture is characterized by Condon (1973) as a way of life. Cultural backgrounds effect people's behaviors and attitudes more than any other factor, regardless of where they are from. There are many facets to culture. What defines a community at any given time are its ideas, traditions, abilities, creative expressions, and tools. This is what we mean when we talk about

culture. It also includes the ideas, concepts, and material possessions that influence our way of life. A person's cultural background shapes their mental and emotional habits. It affects subjective experiences and viewpoints as well as more tangible aspects of life, such leisure pursuits. Despite their apparent independence, language and culture are really highly interdependent and mutually influential fields.

Languages, according to Gleason (1961), are cultural products and symbols in equal measure. Cultural patterns of thought and tradition are frequently explicitly inscribed in a language, which means that the evolution of a language frequently has a substantial influence on the associated culture. Although they are separate concepts, learning a language always necessitates learning about its culture. There is a two-way street between language and culture; both contribute significantly to one another. They are inseparable, and we can't examine or explain just one of them. Two ideas with different meanings, but both are important to understand and learn about for academic and social

reasons. Learning about a new culture is an essential part of being fluent in a foreign language. This remark questions the status quo of language education, which has long focused on the mechanics of language acquisition rather than its cultural context. Major shifts have occurred in pedagogical practices as the value of combining cultural education with language training has become more widely acknowledged. But it's important to remember that even teachers who stuck to more conventional ways of instruction passed on cultural knowledge to their students. This happens because of the unconscious transfer of culture through language, which is caused by how closely related the two are (Brown, 2000).

It is essential to cover this topic while discussing the relationship between language and culture. There is a strong relationship between culture and language, and culture has its own unique impact on language (Sepora & Moghaddas, 2012). Culture, values, beliefs, and practices may be conveyed, communities can be identified, social peace can be promoted, and culture

can be perpetuated through language (Sepora & Moghaddas, 2012). Culture, language, and tradition are all closely related to one another and to the people who make up a community as well as its historical and geographical roots. Bali is one of the most famous tourist spots because of its fascinating culture. Suastika (2015) states that cockfighting is one of many ancestral practices that have been preserved through the years, alongside traditional music and dance. Although cockfighting is seen by some as a type of gambling, it is crucial to note that it is also a cultural practice that is enforced in certain areas. Pauchulo (2005) asserts that despite the importance of culture, many writers agree that cultural elements are still under-emphasized in language classrooms. According to Kumagai (1994), Smith (1987) stated in the introduction to *Discourse Across Cultures* that while different cultures have different grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, it is more important to understand speech-act expressions (e.g., apologies, requests, agreement, disagreement, etc.), appropriate conversation topics,

modes of address, and silence than it is to master these cultural differences in order to communicate effectively across cultures. One must be aware that one's personal discourse methods may differ from those used while speaking internationally and across cultures where English is the main language. Also, don't let your cultural biases color your interpretation of other people's linguistic practices.

When it comes to the realm of education, teaching a language is often seen as a way to impart cultural knowledge within the choir (Gao, 2006). If one learns a language with sufficient linguistic knowledge (vocabulary, grammar, etc.) but inadequate cultural awareness, they are characterized as "a fluent fool" according to Bennett and Robinson (1997). The best way for Indonesian teachers and students of English as a foreign language (EFL) to avoid this is for them to fully grasp the importance of cultural integration in EFL classes. It is more likely that persons will be able to communicate effectively within the cultural context of the target language if they learn about the target language's culture, according to Baltaci

and Tanis (2018). Culture, according to Seelye (1993), is an essential part of language in the context of communication. For effective communication, it is also necessary for both parties to have a common cultural understanding (Tosuncoglu, 2019). Teachers should make sure their pupils have a solid grasp of cultural components so they can completely benefit from integrating culture into language classes. So, it is possible to lessen the frequency of cultural misunderstandings by interacting with people from different backgrounds. According to Giyatmi, EFL teachers of English must make cultural references in their lessons (2019). One benefit is that it encourages pupils to think critically about cultural norms and practices, both inside and outside of their own. Also, when speaking or interacting in English, it might help people avoid cultural confusion and misunderstanding. Students are able to avoid communication pitfalls caused by cultural misunderstandings because of the teaching culture (Kuo & Lai, 2006). Additionally, Onalan (2005) stated that teaching culture helps students communicate better with one

another. In the end, it helps students develop a greater capacity to embrace and value many cultures (Giyatmi, 2019). Understanding the significance of culture in EFL classrooms and how it might help students better grasp the language is the overarching goal of this essay, which aims to investigate the relationship between culture and language.

METHOD

This study's methodology is a hybrid of qualitative and library-based approaches. According to George (2008), doing research at libraries is not an accident but rather a planned and orchestrated procedure. The researcher maintains complete command of the investigation throughout, even though the nature of the sources that may be found is unknown. Library research, on the other hand, is an organized inquiry that makes use of certain resources, rules, and techniques. On the flip side, library research entails mining library resources for information. In order to come up with a thorough conclusion, the researcher also integrates and mixes her ideas. A large number of

books and other sources are cited in this study. The lack of field data further limited the library study. Multiple sources provided the data used in the study. The researcher in this study spoke with an EFL instructor at SD N 1 Kaliuntu to gain their take on how cultural factors play a role in EFL instruction.

FINDINGS

People from different parts of the world speak different languages and come from different cultural backgrounds. Culture and language are not as separate as they seem; in fact, they are highly related and mutually impact one another. The idea that languages are both products and manifestations of culture was put out by Gleason (1961). There is a strong correlation between the encoding of cultural patterns of thought and behavior in language and the influence that language development has on a culture. Armour-Thomas and Gopaul-McNicol (1998) argue that language serves as a social institution that both influences and is impacted by society. What this means is that language is not an independent phenomenon but

rather a social activity that is both influenced by and molded by the social institutions that exist in our society. A certain type of "exchange" between languages and cultures is inevitable, and it is clear that languages cannot exist apart from one another. To become fluent in a second language, one must first understand the cultural ideas held by the people who speak that language.

The way instructors view their students' cultural backgrounds can impact their second language acquisition in both good and bad ways (Stevick, 1982). The ability to understand and work within other cultures is crucial for anyone aspiring to teach a second language or a bilingual classroom. Children may find it easier to learn a second language if they are exposed to culturally basic material, immersed in a culturally rich setting, and provided cultural knowledge. This is because their background knowledge about the second-language culture will make comprehension easier.

As language instructors, we must have an honest interest in studying culture,

not just because we want to teach our students about the traditions of different countries, but also because it is our duty to do so. We risk teaching students meaningless symbols or symbols they mistakenly link with meaning if we only teach language without also teaching the culture that goes along with it. It seems the instructor is cognizant of the role of culture in ESL instruction based on the interview results. This has important implications for the field of education, as it suggests that studying a language is the same as studying a culture, and vice versa. There has to be an integration of cultural competence within the English language education curriculum as well. In order to use language appropriately in different cultural contexts, it is important for language learners to have this type of competence. Teachers of foreign languages have an obligation to inculcate cultural values in their students, and the most efficient means of doing so are through the use of theater and role play. Culture, according to the instructor, is an integral part of any language. It is important for educators to understand

how cultural differences can hinder students' ability to communicate effectively. They can't give their students thorough information until they know the differences. Strong intercultural communication skills are essential, but prior international experience is not required. Aspiring English teachers should take cultural studies as part of their teacher preparation programs. A deeper understanding of a language's cultural background, according to the instructor, helps students bond with both native speakers and other students of the same language. Culture has a significant role in reducing the impact of culture shock on students when they travel to a new country. Our ability to design efficient strategies for teaching and learning a second language depends on our level of understanding of the relationship between culture and language. Culture and language are inseparable. It is important to teach these two concepts together because of their strong link. Teachers must strive for engaging and contextually meaningful language education since motivation is crucial in second language acquisition. Culture-

based English language training equips students with the intercultural competence essential for thriving in today's globalized world. In order to fully grasp a foreign culture, it is crucial for learners to include aspects of both their own and the target culture.

Whether or not they are knowledgeable about cultural differences, teachers still have a responsibility to provide lessons on historical and cultural context. However, teachers with a broad cultural perspective can provide pupils with more organized assessments and explanations that will pique their interest. Teachers who have participated in formal cultural learning programs also know what students need to know and how to impart that knowledge to them. That is why, in a formal classroom setting, aspiring teachers need to study multiple cultures. Learning a language also entails learning about its related culture, according to the area of education's teaching and learning theory. Consequently, educating students about a culture is an integral

part of teaching a language. The teaching of English as a second language should also include lessons on cultural competence. This level of competence is crucial for language learners to acquire so they can use the language appropriately in different cultural settings. It is the responsibility of language teachers to educate their students about other cultures, and the most effective ways to do this are through the use of role play and dramatic interpretation. The instructor goes on to say that while knowing one's grammar and vocabulary are the backbone of any language, having an understanding of other cultures helps students put these pieces together and improves their communication skills. Neglecting this aspect of language could hurt the student's ability to communicate well. When learning English as a second language, students' cultural backgrounds play a significant role in their comprehension of the language's nuances.

DISCUSSION

There is a reciprocal relationship between language and culture. The metaphorical bond between language

and culture is deep and wide-ranging. Since every language is a mental representation of a culture, it follows that language itself is a cultural phenomenon. Conversely, a society's cultural systems include its economic, theological, and philosophical frameworks, as well as its language. Our ideas and notions, which may change over time in response to cultural factors, are expressed through the languages we acquire. A shift in cultural norms is an inevitable consequence of language globalization. Human language, being a learned symbolic communication system, has the obvious advantage of being very adaptable. That is why it is possible to generate new symbols by changing the definition of a word. People accept and understand these changes since they have become a part of people's everyday lives and the "native" culture (Allison & Vining, 1999). Culture is important, according to Pauchulo (2005), although many authors agree that language schools don't do enough to incorporate cultural elements. As one of the five pillars of effective language instruction, the National Standards state that students should

strive to have an understanding of and familiarity with other cultures. Cultural knowledge acquisition and transmission in language classes is often muddled.

Culture, on the other hand, changes people's speech and behavior in addition to their values and traditions. Because language has the power to shape and change a society's culture, it is crucial to learn about different cultures in order to become fluent in a new language. Take, for instance, the persistence of some ancient phrases that have long since faded from popular usage. When new words become linked to certain cultural activities, they emerge as novel terms. It is highly probable that the slang words used by our parents were different from what we use today. There is an intrinsic cultural component to language. A society's language and its culture are inseparable and interdependent parts of each other.

To fully grasp the history and core ideas of second language instruction, one must take cultural factors into account. A nation's language is more

than just its words and phrases; it is a reflection of its deeply held cultural values, beliefs, behavioral standards, and modes of communication. The incorporation of cultural elements into second language instruction strengthens classroom material by providing students with a broader understanding of the target language and its use. After forty years of research, Paige et al. (1999) brought attention to the need of cultural integration in secondary language instruction. Grammatical competence, communication competence, linguistic proficiency, and attitudes towards one's own or another culture are all part of foreign language acquisition, according to Thanasoulas (2001).

In addition to hearing, speaking, reading, and writing, Tomalin (2008) contends that the development of globalization and the widespread use of the English language provide strong grounds for adding culture as a fifth language competence. Learning how to adapt your English usage to better absorb, understand, and appreciate the ideas, practices, and unique traits of different cultures is the fifth language

competence. It involves being able to use language in a way that welcomes change, shows flexibility, and is tolerant of different perspectives. This shift in perspective is communicated via the use of words. Tomalin (2008) argues that there are many facets that should be included in ELT lessons about culture. Gaining familiarity with daily routines and behavior (the little c), learning about cultural institutions (the big C), and developing intercultural sensitivity and awareness through English-language interaction are all part of this.

We can develop more efficient methods of teaching second languages if we understand the relationship between culture and language. Being able to communicate well in more and more data-driven environments is becoming an increasingly valuable skill. Kramsch (1993) argues that one must not overlook culture as a crucial ability in language acquisition. Learning a language and its culture at the same time is necessary for true linguistic knowledge. At the end of the day, our competitiveness is boosted by learning more about cultural concepts, which leads to better language skills.

Teaching English involves teaching language, which is deeply connected to culture, and this fact must be recognized. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that English language instruction is highly related to English culture. The relationship between culture and language is explained by Brown (2000). Culture and language, he says, are interdependent; each is fundamental to the other. Therefore, trying to separate culture or language would be counterproductive. Learning a new language also involves learning about other cultures, especially when it comes to schooling. Consequently, fostering cultural awareness is an intrinsic aspect of teaching a language. According to Gao (2006), teachers of foreign languages should make an effort to raise their students' cultural awareness and communication skills, and they should also acknowledge the importance of cultural studies in the classroom. Wang (2008) argues that instructors of foreign languages also play the role of cultural educators, since teaching a foreign language is fundamentally about imparting knowledge about another culture.

A teacher must approach language and culture differently in the classroom, despite the fact that they both play important roles. Unlike grammar, vocabulary, or syntax, culture cannot be imposed on a student by virtue of its own essence. Rather, educators should adopt a kinder approach and foster an environment where students can autonomously assimilate the cultural elements of the language they are studying. Ultimately, when it comes to teaching a language, cultural factors are paramount. On the one hand, students will be more motivated to learn the language as a native speaker; on the other, incorporating cultural elements into the classroom will make sure they fully understand the complexities of their chosen language while they enjoy and embrace the educational journey.

CONCLUSION

It is clear from the results and the discussion that cultural factors played a significant role in determining how EFL teachers approached their work. In order for pupils to fully

immerse themselves in the process of learning a new language and culture, the teacher acknowledges that teaching English as a foreign language necessitates expressing one's cultural identity through the language. In a nutshell, students need to be motivated by real-life examples and the realities of the English language, and teachers should do the same by introducing students to their own culture while they study.

The researcher recommends that another researcher repeat the study with a larger sample size of teachers; to collect more precise data on teachers' views on the role of culture in EFL instruction, a questionnaire could be useful.

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