MULTICULTURAL TEACHING IN EFL CLASSROOM

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Abstract

Multiculturalism is the identity of most schools in Indonesia since the term deals with varieties in students' cultural backgrounds. In today's curriculum, multiculturalism is stated explicitly in an attempt to promote character buildings. As the result, the teaching and learning process should highlight the aspect of multiculturalism in material, media, as well as teaching strategies. In the implementation, there are some challenges faced by the English teachers. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to describe issues faced by teachers in highlighting multiculturalism value to the teaching of English in a vocational school in Kalimantan Selatan. Four schools are taken as the subject of the study. They are SMKN 4 Banjarmasin, SMKN 3 Banjarbaru, SMKN 1 Bati-Bati, and SMKN 1 Tapin Selatan. Interview and observation are conducted to gather the data that is presented descriptively by following Cresswell's stages; data transcribing, coding and data classification, data interpretation, and drawing the conclusion. The result of the study concludes the challenges faced by the teachers to highlight the multiculturalism aspect in the classroom. The challenges are in terms of media, material, teaching strategies, and support.

Keywords: Multiculturalism, EFL classroom, Issues.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia as a multi-ethnic country, in some ways, face cultural issues where schools can be arenas of intercultural tension. However, it can also be a place for students to interact with their peers and learn to appreciate each other. They are also spaces where children can learn about cultural diversity, their own cultural identity and develop a sense of belonging within a multicultural society (Patthey-Chavez, 1993; Walton, Priest, Kowal, White, Brickwood, Fox & Paradies, 2014).

South Kalimantan is categorized as a unique province where different kinds of ethnicities and tribes mingled as one community. Whether the Banjarese tribe is the dominant one in this province but other tribes and ethnicities are also treated well. Students at schools come from a variety of ethnic, cultural, and religious groups which makes learning even more complex.

The multicultural paradigm implicitly becomes a concern of Article 4 of Law N0. 20 2003 concerning the National Education System. In that article explained, that education is held democratically, not discriminatory by upholding high human rights, religious values, cultural values, and national diversity. Therefore, multicultural education must always be applied and disseminated through education as outlined in the school curriculum, so that children from an early age are taught the attitude of tolerance, respect, love, and accept the difference into an internalized concept in a person.

The Government of Indonesia also develops a Curriculum namely Kurikulum 2013

(K13). This curriculum divides competencies into knowledge, attitude, and skills. Those competencies are also written as KI-1, KI-2, KI-3, and KI-4 that lead to certain teaching materials. The government adopted Krathwohl's attitude of accepting, organizing, valuing, responding, and characterizing. This curriculum also emphasizes local content as well as national and international teaching material.

In general, the attitude competencies for vocational school students have [through accepting, executing, appreciating, experiencing, practicing] behavior that reflects the attitude of the faithful, noble [honest, polite, caring, disciplined, democratic, patriotic], confident, and responsible in interacting effectively with the social environment and nature and in placing itself as a reflection of the nation in the world community. On the other hand, knowledge competence is having [through knowing, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating] procedural and metacognitive knowledge in science, technology, art, culture with human, national, state, and civilization insights related to the causes of phenomena and events [in specific fields of work] according to talent and their interest.

In Indonesia, multicultural learning is very important since it allows the students to understand unity in diversity. The implementation of multicultural education should overcome the issues of ethnic conflict, ethnicl superiority, and discrimination in this disruptive era. Understanding the value as well as recognize the challenges in implementing the multicultural classroom is highly important.

METHOD

This research was a qualitative. Creswell (2010: 8) explained, "Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzed words, the report detailed views of information, and conducts the study in a natural setting".

This study involved 4 different teachers from various schools. The schools represent classrooms at South Kalimantan. The schools had various kinds of students' backgrounds in terms of religion, ethnicity, and languages. These schools were SMKN 4 Banjarmasin, SMKN 3 Banjarbaru, SMKN 1 Bati-Bati, and SMKN 1 Tapin Selatan. All schools were located in different regions in South Kalimantan, Indonesia. The students at that school vary from their ethnicity, religion, and tribe. Therefore, these schools were also chosen because of their uniqueness in terms of their majors and geographic areas. SMKN 1 Tapin Selatan and SMKN 1 Bati-Bati represent schools located in the suburban region. Whereas SMKN 3 Banjarbaru and SMKN 4 Banjarmasin represent school located in city.

The data for this study were collected through interviews and observation. We implemented two kinds of interviews: preliminary and in-dept interviews. The preliminary interview was conducted before the observation. In the interview, the teacher was asked several questions regarding their opinion about a multicultural issue.

The observation was implemented to see the actual practices of the teacher in providing evaluation in the classroom. It examined the strategies in giving evaluation and the teaching and learning process. The observation was conducted in 3 meetings starting at the beginning of students' learning writing process until the process was finished. In one meeting, the observation was held approximately 90 minutes. During the observation, one of the researchers acted as a non-participant observer.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results from Observation

The result of observation and interview is presented as follows.

The result of observation on SMKN 1 Banjarmasin

Aspects	Types	Activities
Methods	Three-Phase Technique	- Teacher opens by checking students' attendants. - Teacher groups the students to play vocabulary games. - Teacher explains the lesson. - Teaches evaluates students' understanding by asking them to work on the workbook. - Teacher closing the lesson by reviewing today's lesson.
Media	- Flashcard - Whiteboard	- Teacher distributes the flashcard to each group. - Teacher uses a whiteboard to write the result of the game.

Three-Phase Technique is the method used by the teacher, indicated by the use of motivation

In the teaching and learning process in this school, the teacher uses the game to enggage students' attention. In the game, students are divided into several groups and given a pile of the flashcard. Students are responsible to handle the flashcard and arranged it on their table. Then, the teacher leads the game by reading the dictionary meaning of specific words and students should pick the correct flashcard. In this activity, teacher's control lied on the instruction given and time allotment. In contrast, students were allowed to write their groups' scores on the whiteboard.

The vocabulary games are presented at the early stage of the lesson which made the

students feel ready and motivated for learning. The vocabulary on the flashcard was also relevant to the material on the whilst activity so it reduced teacher talk to elicit the vocabulary

The result of observation on SMKN 3 Banjarbaru

Aspects	Types	Activities
Methods	The-Phase Technique	- Teacher opens the lesson by asking the students to recite The Holy Qur'an. - Teacher reviews the previous lesson by asking several questions. - Teacher mentions the learning objective. - Teacher explains the material in terms of the purpose, the part of the letter, language used, tenses, mechanics, and the topics. - Teacher asks students' ethnicity and asks them to write a personal letter about their cultures. - Teacher closes the lesson.
Media	- Realia	- Teacher closes the lesson.

The objective of the lesson dealt with the ability to write a personal letter. During the teaching, the teacher involves students' varied backgrounds in the lesson by asking students' ethnic backgrounds. After that, they are asked about cartoon characters they are familiar with. Students were led by example when the teacher talks about *Si Palui*, an iconic local cartoon character. There, the teacher guides the students to activate the schemata and use it to write a

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similar topic into a personal letter. It is in line with a previous study conducted by Supriyono and Dewi (2017), who suggested an immersion between local culture and English language learning to prepare students' psychology, social, and also culture.

The result of observation on SMKN 1 Bati-Bati

Aspects	Types	Activities
Methods	Grammar-Translation method	- Teacher opens the lesson by leading the students to recite Asmaul Husna. - Teacher gives motivation by telling a religious and historical story. - Teacher relates the story to today's lesson. - Teacher leads the students to read the text aloud. - Teacher leads the students to discuss the meaning of several vocabularies by translating them into Bahasa Indonesia. - Teacher explains the lesson about recount text. - Teacher gives the exercise by asking the students to identify the verbs used in the text. - Teacher discusses the text by asking several questions. - Teacher gives evaluation by grouping the students to anwser the question in the

Aspects	Types	Activities
		students' book.
Media	- Students' book - Whiteboard	- Teacher asks students to read aloud the text from the book. - Teacher asks students to write the verbs they found in the text. - Teacher shows how to change verb 1 into verb 2.

20 minutes of the lesson is allocated to recite Holy Qur'an as the opening of the lesson. After that, the lesson is followed by reading a heroic story of the independence movement in Surabaya. The vocabulary used in the story is discussed by finding the meaning in the dictionary along with pronunciation practice. The lesson is dominated by translation activity and grammatical aspect explanation.

The result of observation on SMKN 1 Tapin Selatan

Aspects	Types	Activities
Methods	Three-Phase Technique	- Teacher opens the lesson by asking one of the students to lead the prayers. - Teacher used pictures of Disney fairytales to get students' attention. - Teacher explains the material. - Teacher assigns students to work in groups. - Teacher gives evaluation.
Media	LCD Projector and Laptop	- Teacher shows a picture (Disney fairytales) to engage students' attention. - Teacher shows picture series (Malin

	Kundang).

The lesson was divided into three stages; opening, main, and closing. From the observation, it is clear that the teacher uses a three-phase technique since it is started by giving motivation on, teacher's explanation on the presented material, and closed by giving feedback. Cristiani (2016) re-explains that the first phase of this technique is giving motivation to the students and triggering the students' critical thinking. The second phase is giving the skill to the students as the main stage of the learning activity. The last part is a closure or wrapping the lesson and giving feedback to the students. Every lesson should be opened by reciting prayers that are led by the students' representatives. The prayer recital is an obligatory rule in the school. In the main activity, students were grouped into several small groups and assigned to work on the worksheet. The grouping system allowed the students to discuss and engage into interactive interaction.

Results from Interview

Aspects	Respond			
	SMKN 1 Banjarmasin	SMKN 3 Banjarbaru	SMKN 1 Bati-Bati	SMKN 1 Tapin Selatan
Media	Flashcard	Use realia	Use pictures from books	Printed pictures from internet
Material	Published book by a private publisher	Published book by government publisher	Published book by government publisher	Published book by government publisher
Teaching Strategies	Using word games	Using	Using group work	Using discussion
Support	No explicit support from stakeholder	No explicit support from stakeholder	No explicit support from stakeholder	No explicit support from stakeholder

The teachers from the four different schools used varied media. They are familiar with the use of media in enhancing students' motivation and involvement in the lesson. All of the teachers tried to promote students centered learning by assigning students to work in the group even though all of the activities are still initiated by the teachers.

Discussion

From the interview and observation, it can be concluded that the issues faced by the teachers are in terms of choosing the media, interpreting the English material, teachers' competence in deciding teaching strategies, and stakeholder support. The discussion is as follows.

Challenges in Media Used

Media plays an important role in the learning process. Ali (2009) stated that the function of media in teaching and learning is to increase the stimulation of learning activities Making and choosing media are teachers' everyday duties. Finding pictures, videos, or captions for the English teaching are not issues for them. However, when it comes to multiculturalism, the teachers admit that it is a tricky job. Choosing media is no longer simples when the media should be able to give knowledge, promote certain attitudes, and teach skills as demanded by the curriculum. The teachers faced difficulties in interpreting the competencies into instructional media. In line with this matter, Zarbaliyef (2017) said that it can be done by multicultural education implanted in children through learning in schools and homes. A teacher is responsible for giving education to students and is assisted by parents in seeing differences occurring in their daily life.

Challenges in Focusing Material

The ideas of multicultural teaching are Indonesia's vision mandate from *nawacita*. The implementation of *nawacita* in terms of multiculturalism should be integrated into the teaching and learning process including the assessment. The Government also restates this into president law (*Peraturan Presiden Nomor: 87 Tahun 2017 tentang Penguatan Pendidikan Karakter*) that said the educational institution should strengthen religious values, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard-working, creativity, independence, democratic, curiosity, nationality, appreciating achievements, communicative, peace, fond of reading, caring for the environment, and social responsibility. In reality, the English materiasl in the published books in the market do not explicitly state the value mentioned. Therefore, teachers are expected to reconstruct the material by themselves. Teachers should interpret and integrate the material so it meets the president law demand. As the result, there is no standard on how the material should be presented in the classroom. Most teachers neglect the ideas of multicultural teaching and treat the students in homogenous ways.

Instead of the problem mentioned, Indonesia is very potential to conduct multicultural classrooms. As stated by Zarbaliyev (2017), Indonesia has three great challenges in implementing multicultural education, namely: (1) regions, ethnics, and traditions; (2) Faith, plural society always considers risks of differences. Risks of suspect/fear or unbelief in others can also occur when there is no communication in a plural society; (3) Tolerance, tolerance is the highest form, indicating that we can gain belief. Tolerance can be a reality when we assume that there is a difference. Further, Suyahman (2016), postulate that implementation of multicultural education is based on five dimensions: (1) the integration of content, (2) the process of formulating knowledge, (3) the elimination of prejudice, and (4) similar pedagogy, and (5) school culture and structure that empowers schools.

Challenges in Teachers Competence

In dealing with culturally diversed students, Khatoon, Rehman, and Ajmal (2011) pointed out several considerations, are (1) knowledge about ethnic minorities and the complex nature of their position in society, a clear ideas of meaning and application of the term "cultural diversity", (2) a positive attitude toward minority parents and an ability to listen to their viewpoint, an ability to view society from a position of minority communities, and (3) ability to offer all pupils equality of opportunity based on subject and skill. Therefore, the ideal teaching strategies for the multicultural classroom is cooperative learning. Theoretically, all of the teachers are familiar with the strategies. They believe that cooperative learning relies on the use of group work, authentic material, and students centered activities. However, the values of the multicultural classroom are not highlighted well since the issues of diversity and respect are not explicitly mentioned. The teachers' competence to design such activities is highly demanded to create exposure and providing varied material. Infact, the teachers are still stuck in the traditional teaching method where the teacher is the center of the learning.

The teaching and learning process in the schools observed is still teacher-centered since it focuses on the grammatical aspects, uses a particular textbook, and puts the teacher as the source of the information. Even though the teachers use group work and collaborative work, the students' activities are still iniciated by teachers. Hence, teachers' competence in setting the class into students centered is still lacking. The teachers failed to initiate communication and self-initiation to the learning.

Challenges in Stakeholders' Support

Stakeholders hold very important aspects in achieving the goal of multicultural issues in teaching and learning. Stakeholders in this matter are the school principal, parents' organization, and supervisors, as well as government representatives such as the state educational affairs office. Based on the interview,

it can be said that multicultural issue is not a main concern by the stakeholder. Teachers' meeting still concerns with cognitive goals and strategies. The teachers imply that they are open to the implementation of new teaching strategies, materials, or any kind of professional development as long as it is facilitated by the government. The teachers' concern toward multicultural issues in the classroom cannot be done alone, but should systematically. All teachers and stakeholders should work hand in hand to enhance the message of multiculturalism in the teaching and learning process.

CONCLUSIONS

Multiculturalism in Indonesia education is important and also considered an urgent matter. Indonesia Government has already stated it into their curriculum through attitude competencies for school students. However, the execution on the field is still dull and needs extra effort. Teachers as the subject in this research find difficulties in emerging the multicultural education to English subject at school. Some challenges such as media, materials, teachers' competencies are also barriers in building multicultural awareness in EFL classrooms.

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