

The English Department Students' Reasons of Choosing the Native Teacher in Cross Cultural Understanding (CCU) Course

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ABSTRACT

It is an uncontested fact that native teacher and non-native teacher's competence are still hot issues for people in educational field. So that the study needs to be conducted because the researchers attempt to reveal what makes students of English Department choose a native speaker in learning Cross-Cultural Understanding class. The study addresses the following question: Why English Department student choose native teacher for Cross-Cultural Understanding class. The result of this study will be useful for those are studying students' reasons in learning various cultures from a native teacher and the issue of native teacher's competence in teaching. The respondents to this study were four third-year-students from English Department of Satya Wacana Christian University. The respondents still took Cross-Cultural Understanding course when the study was conducted. Additionally, four respondents were individually interviewed regarding their reasons of choosing native teacher by using unstructured interview. This study established that the teacher's nativeness did not influence the participants to choose native teacher in CCU class. However, they were more considering on the teacher's knowledge, teacher's skill in teaching, teacher's background culture and teacher's teaching style.

Key words: cultural class, native teacher, EFL students, teacher's knowledge, teacher's skill in teaching, teacher's background culture, teacher's teaching style.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Talking about the globalization era which everything is developing, there are many options provided in every case. People seem to have many choices and considerations toward their lives so do students in their learning. Students, of any major, will be selective when they take something. They would like to choose the best thing for themselves. They would be selective to get what they want relating to their development in the learning process. Thus, there will be specific reason underlying the decision they make. Since the study is conducted by the students of English Department Satya Wacana Christian University, the study will be focusing on the EFL students. The English Department students do not only need the best school and educations system but also the best teacher to guide and facilitate them in the learning process. In university level they will choose

the best teacher for them when they register the courses that they need. The English Department students will arrange their schedule of courses they take by choosing the teacher who is teaching the course.

In Faculty of Language and Literature Satya Wacana Christian University many students are often selective. They are selective not only in choosing the courses but also the teacher. The faculty has got a number of native and non native teachers. They had their own perspectives on the teachers. In addition, the students also have their favorite teachers. Besides, every teacher has different background of knowledge. The teachers also have their own skill and style in teaching. Many factors also contribute on the perspectives of the students to choose the teachers. The factors are knowledge, skill, teaching style, attitude, and teacher's background culture, how well they have known each other personally and so on.

We were interested in studying the reasons why EFL students in English Department choose native teacher in the course that related to cultural matter because we want to explore those reasons which related to effectiveness and quality of teaching. We focused on students' perceptions of native and non native teacher. Moreover, we choose CCU class students because it is one of the classes that teach about cross culture. Besides, this class has a native teacher so it will give us an opportunity to conduct the study. Thus, we hope the participants will provide the answers that related to both of nativeness and cultural matter.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study needs to be conducted because the researchers attempt to reveal what made students of English Department choose a native speaker in learning Cross Cultural Understanding (CCU). Moreover, the result of this study will be useful for those who are studying students' reason in learning various culture from a native teacher and the issue of native teacher's competence in teaching. Furthermore, this study is also important for the dean of Faculty of Language and Literature Satya Wacana Christian University in deciding the appropriate native teachers for teaching CCU classes.

The focuses of the study are first the factor underlying the students' preference to native teacher and the notion of native teacher in world Englishes era. Besides, the study is focused to know whether the participants still believe in learning best from the so called native teacher. As Holliday (2005) cited in Wu Kun-Hei argues that "...Native speakers have tended to be regarded as the model."

The reason why the variable of the study is the Cross Cultural Understanding (CCU) class is language (English) holds the main part in understanding various cultures as according to Norris-Holt (2001) says "Given that language and thought are directly related...language (is) a natural vehicle for fostering cross cultural, cross boundary understanding." Specifically, when talking about the source of various culture, it leads students that the knowledge of the culture will be learned better from the owner of it. Thus, in this study the researchers also attempt to seek this reason from the participants.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Assuming that native teacher has different culture with English Department students, then it will be a consideration among the students to choose the course that related to cultural matter.

Cited from Byram and Grundy, (2002) "‘Culture’ in language teaching and learning is usually defined pragmatically as a/the culture associated with a language being learnt." It means that culture of the native teacher can not be separated with the English that he/she teaches for English Department students. Since both teacher and students have to bring culture in to the classroom, will it be a problem if the teacher and the students have different background culture? However, before entering the class itself, we have to know what aspects that influence the students to choose the native teacher for their Cross Cultural Understanding Class. So that, in this study we would attempt to answer our research question which is : What factors underlying four English Department students to choose native teacher in Cross Cultural Understanding class?

METHODOLOGY

A. Context of The Study

Before conducting the research, we are students of faculty of language and literature SWCU angkatan 2008. As long as we follow our study, we felt that our native speakers bring a significant influence for us. So, we decided to do a research to find out what factors that make our friends choose a native speaker as their lecturer.

This study focuses on the CCU B class the faculty of language and literature in SWCU. It is located in Salatiga, Central Java, Indonesia. We choose CCU B class because it is the only class which is taught by the native speaker. The students in this class are often deal and communicate with the native speakers in this department. It is because they are the students of English Department so they don't find any difficulties when they have to deal with the native. This course has 3 credits and it is held once a week on Tuesday and it is in 6th semester. In addition, we choose CCU B class because we think that other of this course is taught by the native speaker, also because in CCU we can learn some cultures in the world. Besides, we have some access to do our research because the students of this class are our friends. This would help us to observe and do our research easily.

For your information this course is recommended for all ED students because it introduces ways of thinking and analytical skills that will enable students to function effectively in any cultural contexts, and in particular acquire experience dealing with the numerous cultural differences among the ethnic groups in Indonesia as well as around the world. This course also provides a framework from which students can be multicultural teacher-scholars within an increasing multicultural world.

Category	General Information	Specific Information
Kinds of school	University	
Geographical information	Salatiga, Central Java, Indonesia	
Contact with English speaker	Often deal and communicate with the native speakers in this department.	
The CCU class		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ has 3 credit ▪ it is held once a week on Tuesday ▪ it is in 6th semester
The aim of the course		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide a framework from which students can be

		multicultural teacher-scholars within an increasing multicultural world. ■ introduces ways of thinking and analytical in any cultural contexts
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B. Participants

The respondents to this study were four third-year students from English Department of Satya Wacana Christian University. The participant were chosen based on the sample of convenience in which they can be accessed easiliy by the researchers. They are still taking Cross Cultural Understanding course which aims are providing a framework from which students can be multicultural teacher-scholars within an increasing multicultural world and introducing ways of thinking and analytical in any cultural contexts. Their lecturer for CCU class is an American man who has not been living in Indonesia for more than two years.

C. Instrument of Data Collection

In attempting to answer the research question related to the English Department CCU students' perceptions toward the reason of choosing the native teacher in the course that related to cultural matter, the methodology used is interview. Further, the data was collected by using unstructured interview, because the participants were only four so it will not be that much difficult to analyze and we as the researchers have opportunities to gain richer data. The interview takes about 10 minutes for each participant. The participants get 7 questions and the researchers are free to add additional question in order to explore the participants' answer (see Appendix A).

DISCUSSION AND RESEARCH FINDING

The data collected are displayed in such way that makes it simple without reducing the main keys of the study. These are the data gathered from the interview based on the sequence of the interview items:

In term of the expectation of learning the Cross Cultural Understanding course

The students are expecting to learn various knowledge of cultures ,indeed, not only Indonesian culture but also language and culture all over the world. Also, they find that the course provides help in learning their own identities and their local culture as well. Regarding to their expectations, they added that their identities and cultures which affects the way they act and the way they talk are needed to be tolerated. Thus, there will be a clear understanding on the cultural dealing or overcoming when they face a multicultural situation.

In term of students' reason in choosing Native Teacher (NT) for the Cross Cultural Understanding course

The students stated that the reasons they choose the native teacher was because of the teacher's competence in delivering the lesson. The teacher can transfer the informations in the material book to the students and at the same time the teacher also connects his background culture

and the students' cultures in teaching. Thus, the students are more aware of the world's cultures and of course their own culture.

In term of students' attitude to the native teacher

The native teacher was preferred because of his praise to students works. The students like the native teacher in teaching as he always respects and appreciates the students' ideas. The teacher always gives motivational comment on the students' achievement although what the students have achieved is not really satisfying such as "Excellent! Good job! It was quite a deep thought! etc" Besides, the students think that the teacher bestows clear explanation when he is teaching the subject. It means that they do not really consider the teacher nativeness, instead they consider more in his teaching skill.

In term of the competence of the Cross Cultural Understanding's native teacher

All of the students or participants said that the native teacher is competent in teaching Cross Cultural Understanding class. He gives a lot of knowledge regarding to the various cultures, came to the class with well-prepared material and well-organized teaching agenda. Further, he explained everything clearly. Although the teacher has western culture in his blood, he still has got an ability to teach not only his western culture but also other cultures in the world such as Indonesian culture, Chinese culture, Spanish culture, etc.

In term of teacher's teaching method

According to the participants of this study, the teacher uses various teaching methods when he manages the class. One of the methods used is direct method, in this case was English with regard to the fact that he was a native teacher from United States. One positive side of using direct method was to encourage the students to speak English. It was expected that the students would contribute active participation in class. As Harmer (2007) suggested that "...encouraged adventurous students who are prepared to have a go even when they are not completely sure of the language they are trying to use." In addition, he attempts to make the class alive by allowing the students express their thoughts freely.

In term of teacher's knowledge about the content of the material

The value of a teacher depends not just on their ability to use the language, but also on their knowledge about that language and their understanding of how to facilitate both that ability and that knowledge in the minds of their students.

(Harmer 2007:119)

According to Harmer it can be concluded that it is not only the language of the teacher that matters but the understanding on the students' ability to absorb the material also have to be considered. Thus, teacher's knowledge in the material is really needed to facilitate the students understanding on the material which is taught. Teacher's knowledge and experiences are symbolized as a bridge to connect the students with the material provided.

In term of the effect of teacher's culture in choosing native teacher

The participants said that native teacher's background culture affect their consideration in choosing CCU teacher. However, it is not the main consideration. There are still many factors underlying their decision. Since the teacher has a background cultures as a foreigner, one of the participant was curious to know more how he teaches his students who have different culture from him.

Eventhough there are some factors underlying students to choose native teacher in CCU class, but there is one of students who gives one reason why she chooses native teacher. It's because if the teacher is native, he must have acquaired the culture. In other words, if we want to learn other people's cultures, we have to learn from the person who has the background knowledge about it.

FINDINGS

By analyzing the data gathered, it can be concluded that the factors in choosing native speaker in CCU class is divided into four factors.

The Data Will Be Analyzed According To The Following Aspects:

- A. Teacher's Knowledge
- B. Teacher's Skill in Teaching
- C. Teacher's Background Culture
- D. Teacher's Teaching Style

Those above factors are elaborated below:

A. Teacher's knowledge

The participants choose native teacher in CCU class because the teacher has great knowledge, not only about the culture but also in other aspects such as mastering his other courses that is related with cultural matter. In a work, Putnam (2000) says that teaching is a complex act, requiring many kinds of knowledge. Thus, teacher's knowledge of subject matter content, general pedagogical principles and strategies, and educational goals is crucial in the learning process to be considered when choosing to whom learners will learn to. In the end, the value of a teacher depends not just on their ability to use a language, but also on their knowledge about that language and their understanding of how to facilitate both that ability and that knowledge in the minds of their students.

B. Teacher's skill in teaching

The participants said that native teacher is competent in teaching various cultures. He explains the materials clearly and delivers the materials in a good way. One of the participants mentioned that the teacher can give positive reinforcement and motivation to learn culture deeper. Others said that the teacher challenges the students to think critically about identity and culture. Also, he helps the students in picking something to be followed or skipped related to cultural matter.

C. Teacher's background culture

Teacher's background culture affect the participants to choose native teacher for CCU class because the course required the knowledge about culture. Native teacher has different background culture from the participants, so they think that they can share or transfer their own

culture to each other. The participants also choose native teacher in CCU class because they want to learn about culture from someone who has acquired the culture itself.

D. Teacher's teaching style

According to the participants' responses, they agree that teacher's teaching style also affects them to choose native teacher in CCU class. The teacher uses student-centered in his way of teaching. He usually asks the student to work in groups and share their idea to each other. He also allows the students to express their thought. Maybe the participants feel comfortable with those methods of teaching so they choose the native teacher. For example, when the teachers from one culture (American) teach students from another (Indonesia), it is often easy to see where cultural and educational differences reside. However, it is not a matter of background of the teachers but it is about the methodological culture.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

As mentioned earlier, the study was conducted in order to seek out the factors of students choosing native teacher in CCU class. Nevertheless, it is quite difficult that the study is intercorrelated with participants' assumption toward native teacher. In addition, the researcher should also choose participants from non-native teacher class in order to make the study more reliable. Despite the limitations of the study, which the researchers hope to overcome in the next study, the result is still appropriate to the significance of the study. Student's perception reveals that it is not about the nativeness issue but more on the knowledge and teaching skills of CCU teachers must have.

First, the researchers were able to collect the data within one semester. The researchers interviewed four participants in one CCU class in English Department of Satya Wacana Christian University in Salatiga, Central Java. The target research is native teacher because the teacher has background culture and background knowledge in teaching culture.

CONCLUSION

The students who had been interviewed were the students who are taking CCU class. Overall, the participants choose the native teacher is *not considering about the teacher's nativeness but more in the teacher's knowledge and teacher's skill in teaching*. Besides, he has different background culture and always gives the students positive reinforcement so they feel comfortable with the teacher. Moreover, he always respects and appreciates the students' opinion.

The first participants' perception is Teacher's knowledge, the participants' responses are shown by using the words: *"has broad or wide knowledge, has very great knowledge when delivering the materials, and the clarity in delivering the material."* This may indicate that the teacher's knowledge when teaching is very important for the students to understand the cross-cultural understanding. It also means that teacher's knowledge about a certain subject will affect the ability to attract the students so that the students will be motivated to learn those CCU courses.

The second students' perception is Teacher's skills in teaching, the participants' responses are indicated by the words: *"very competent, explained everything clearly, gives many knowledge about various culture."* The word *competent* indicates that the native-teachers have richer knowledge in teaching culture because they come from the country where the culture is used to teach in class.

The third students' perception is Teacher's background culture, the participants responses are indicated by the words: "competence (knowing the culture a lot)". This is almost the same with the teacher's knowledge when teaching culture for the participants. The participants are interested in following the classroom activity because the teacher's background culture brings good atmosphere in class.

And the last is students' perception about Teachers' teaching style, the teacher like to ask the participants to work in groups in order to strengthen the students' confidence when they have to share their ideas in class. The students will feel free to share their ideas. This teaching style makes the students feel comfortable when following the class activity.

Related to CCU course, most participants believed that native teacher play the important roles when teaching cultures in this era. The teacher's background culture affects more on their performances to make the students feel interested in learning cross cultural. If the teacher has background knowledge in culture, they will be able to teach their students effectively. The students also get benefits because the students can learn western culture from the source and encourage the students to speak English. The teacher's background knowledge affects in the way delivering material to the students. If the teacher has good background knowledge in cultural matter, they will deliver the material on the right target which is the culture itself or vice versa.

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APPENDIX A : INTERVIEW ITEMS

1. What do you think you can learn from CCU course?
2. Why do you choose the native teacher?
3. What's your attitude towards the native teacher ?
4. Do you think the CCU native teacher is competent in teaching? Explain!
5. What teaching method is used in the course? Describe!
6. What do you think about the teacher's knowledge about the content of materials?

Since the course is CCU, does the culture of the teacher affect you to choose the native teacher