

The Lecturers' Perceptions on Reading Material based on Local Culture in South Sulawesi Indonesia

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Abstract. The present study aimed to figure out the lecturers' perceptions on local cultured-based reading material in an English Study Program in South Sulawesi Indonesia. The data for the study were collected through semi-structured interview of five active lecturers at the department. The findings of the study showed that the majority of the lecturers agreed and have positive responds toward the English reading material based on local culture. However, the lecturers gave some cautious and suggestions on its' application in the classroom. Based on the findings, the lecturers generally agreed with the reading material based on local culture as the complement of the existed reading subjects at the study program.

Keywords: lecturer, perception, reading material, local culture

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I. INTRODUCTION

English is taught massively and variously in Indonesia. In Indonesia English is generally taught at some levels of schools like: early year school, secondary schools, high school, college and university. Most of the levels and schools use both general English and specific English, and the English material are mostly based on west culture background (American and British language and culture). This study is an attempt to see the lecturers' perceptions towards the application of English reading material based on local culture especially for university students, and some responds and suggestions about it. This is a part of dissertation and it is a pilot research done by the researcher (writer) and the goal of this research was implementing the research based on the perceptions lecturers and also to facilitate their ideas and expression of lecturers toward it. The discussion of the results allows to look through and their point of views of what is implemented in the reading subject in the English language and study program and how about the insertion of local culture in reading material, the findings in this study and conclusions for English lecturers' perceptions about the implementation of English Reading materials based on local culture.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Perception

Perception is a view or opinion based on experience and external factors of individual, set of internal sensational cognitive processes of the brain at the subs-conscious cognitive function layer that relates, detects, interprets, and searches internal cognitive information in the mind, it involving the stimuli and our senses, it justifies our beliefs on the objects and beliefs and it leads the words as the both opinion and observation an(Wang: 2007, Rookes & Wilson: 2005, Banda: 2004, Bernhardt: 2015, Nichols: 2007).

2.2. Local Culture and Values

Local values can also be considered as ideas or values, a wise local view that is, noble value, wisdom Local knowledge which all blended and formed a respected local culture of as well as the natural conditions in general. Local wisdom is in the values, customs and maxims and other forms of life. With the implementation of local wisdom values, to forms of local values in the community: values, norms, ethics, beliefs, customs, customary law, and others, while the kinds of local values related to social groups, traditional values, values that are developed traditional society that shaped ethics, Processes and procedures, preserve nature, place and space (Sri Supiah Cahyati and Cynantia Rahmija: 2017).

2.3. Local Culture in EFL

Local and native cultures like the rules and norms also are also needed to be taught and learned beside teaching and learning English. Today the population non-native speakers of English are more than the native speakers of English as a second language and English as a foreign language teaching and learning of target language culture becomes no more than important than local culture. Local culture which is taught and learned at the while learning English, to promote English as a global language, the equality between target culture and local culture in learning English have to be in balance (Tantri: 2013). In fact, the varieties of English today like Singaporean English, Chinese English, Indian English, and African English and so forth are also because of the impacts of the needs of the local people where it is learned. English as an International Language or EIL does not exclusively belong to a certain variety of English (Sharifian, 2009). English for non-native today is colored by their own locals' backgrounds and identities and this makes English learning as international language more vary and diverse (Sharifian, 2009; Alptekin, 2010).

Later on, this creates the Lingua francas worldwide where the nativity of speaking is no longer necessary because every local culture it has its own uniqueness and differences, but as long as they can mutually understand one among other it is ok overall (Alptekin, 2010). Recently about eighty percent of the two billion English users are using more than one language (bilingual) and the nonnative speakers are bigger in population and it is the effect of English as global and international language (Sharifian, 2009; Alptekin, 2010). The local culture in foreign language language is also potential to minimize the loss sense of nationality among the nonnatives (Sukarno, 2012; Sudartini, 2012).

English as a foreign language can be a potential threatens to Indonesian cultures and this anxiety encourage the Ministry of Education in Indonesia decided to make English as mere a supplementary subject in elementary schools instead of being a compulsory subject as it was and according to Suhartini (2012) ELT teachers assume that there are no boundaries between Indonesian culture and foreign cultures when teachers teach English to their students (Sudartini, 2012), the Ministry of Education assumes that the Indonesian young generation is abandoning Indonesian cultures as the western cultures is greatly dominates in this country in almost all aspects through television, movie, songs (arts), internet social media and so on (Afifah, 2012). English as a foreign language can be a potential threatens to Indonesian cultures and this anxiety encourage the Ministry of Education in Indonesia decided to make English as mere a supplementary subject in elementary schools instead of being a compulsory subject as it was and according to Suhartini (2012) ELT thers assume that there are no boundaries between Indonesian culture and foreign cultures when teachers teach English to their students (Sudartini, 2012), the Ministry of Education assumes that the Indonesian young generation is abandoning Indonesian cultures as the western cultures is greatly dominates in this country in almost all aspects through television, movie, songs (arts), internet social media and so on (Afifah, 2012).

This study is aimed to figure out the perceptions of lecturers about reading English material based on local culture ,the material is dedicated for first year students of English Literature department at Faculty of Adab (Letters) and Humanities UIN (State Islamic University) Alauddin Makassar to see the view and understand of what lecturers perceives toward the idea of using reading English material based on local culture (in this case the local culture of South Sulawesi which are consist of four main ethnic groups: Makassar, Bugis, Mandar, and Toraja) to apply it to the students of early semesters (first year students), the following is research what are the perception of lecturers toward the use of English reading material based on local culture in English literature department of UIN Alauddin Makassar?

III. METHODOLOGY

This research is based an earlier piloting qualitative research. The aim of the study was to see the perceptions of the lecturers at English department study program of UIN Alauddin Makassar regarding on the reading materials based on local culture to be applied in that department, audio recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim and coded. Themes and categories were taken from the analysis of the transcripts following Tesch's steps for open coding (Creswell, 1994). The categories were given names derived from the actual responses of the participants (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2000).

The present study investigated the lecturers of English language and literature study program' perceptions of English reading material based on local culture. The study examined three related areas including lecturers' understanding of English reading material based on local culture concepts, their views on the idea of implementation of English material based on local culture, in the classroom. Therefore, the following research questions were addressed: how is the perception of lecturers of English language and literature study program toward the implementation of English reading material based on local culture?

The participants of this study were lecturers who are working at English language and literature study program for bachelor program (S-1) the 5 lecturers were teachers participated in this study. 5 female lecturers and 1 the lecturer were 30-40 years old, their teaching experience ranged from 5 years, 10 to 20 years. The survey instrument devised by Jeon and Hahn (2006) was applied to see the perceptions of lecturers at English

language and literature department toward the use of the English reading material based on local culture. The questionnaire is open open-ended interview, it is also included the information about the teachers' teaching level, gender, age, and teaching experience.

Some lecturers explained the challenges of existed reading material subject and also the subject of reading itself to be taught in EFL class, one of the lecturers believed that it needs to adapt to the lesson because the local culture in EFL is not common in available EFL materials everywhere in the country, it puts extra efforts for lecturers to make it if they want it, This could partially be caused by their previous experience in using the reading material based on foreign culture and especially the most common EFL material is based on American and British culture etcetera, the respondents pointed out their awareness of the importance of local culture and wisdoms in EFL learning and teaching, they argued about the consequences which probably occur as a result of lack of local culture literacy, the lecturers thought that some students will to take part and participate in the EFL classroom even more with some prior knowledge they already have before the class.

The local culture in EFL is also emerged and take possibility of sharing among student ideas like differences in views and opinions, the differences in ideas, the lecturers also sharing about the possibility of lack and shortcoming of using local culture material in EFL especially the reading subject class, the unnatural English lack of learning natural English, but it is seem ok for nonnative speaker of English because most of students (this case seem to be higher in the low/beginner level of EFL/ESL students) they generally could not express themselves in English freely, or some of the ideas sounds unnatural but it is normal overall in both western culture/foreign culture and local culture, due their nativity in language which is non English, the lecturers hold the view that natural or unnatural English language is normal in ESL/LFL learning and teaching including the idea of using local culture reading material for EFL learners, the lecturers are also feel this is a unique, contemporary, in teaching and learning based on prior experience in classrooms.

The role the lecturer is to implement the local culture in English reading, Student and teachers should concern about the difficulty and complexity of the local culture reading in EFL/ESL subject, They indicated how much time it takes for a teacher to deal with every single student, how difficult it might be to distribute equal time for everyone, how difficult it is to take an active role as a teacher in this approach and how difficult it might be to provide guidance or assistance for everyone, approach takes so much time of the teacher. It takes time to deal with every single student individually and equally so this is not easy for a teacher, expectations of the students and preoccupied beliefs of teachers are working against this shift in roles, students initially resist the shift to student centered pedagogy because it requires them to take personal responsibility for their learning, the lecturers' perception they mostly feel themselves comfortable with local culture because the lecturers mostly have the prior knowledge as well as students before entering the classroom, the data is related with the teaching-learning activities of English reading material based on local culture, Participants stated that the presentations done by the groups will probably be boring and the lecturers should use vary activities and methods constantly, lecturers also talked about lecturers' learning experience of reading subject based on previous semesters the lecturers saw the students enthusiasm, and the thing we should know that every students are unique and has its own learning style and interests, some students need extra treatments and care and need more material and motivation to boost their learning spirit and so on it is describes by one of the lecturers (LR 4) "The first year students generally can keep up with simple reading, where the reading complexity level is upgraded the students are started to confuse and feel difficulty, the difficulty will be more if we give them the reading from various fields like English for specific purposes".

Question 2: Even though the hard copy material is still used in practice in learning reading subject the source materials are dominated by the eBook or non-printed electronic book, the lecturers usually asked the students to get the reading materials via online or from internet, it is mostly in terms of ebooks and non-hardcopy, the exercise can be printed by the students and the ebooks itself are distributed among the students via whatsapp and it is usually distributed before the meeting as confirmed by LR 3 "from eBook which is written in English and published by foreign/international reputable publishers", the other lecturer (LR 5) confirmed the first perception (LR3): "the eBooks and other learning sources are mainly taken from internet.

Question 3: The context of reading learning either general or specific, some lecturers lead his/her learning based on the department or the students' major (in this case literary context) so that he/she are more emphasize the learning based on the literary topics/themes, some lecturers lead the material to the TOEFL orientation (in this case the literary reading topic of TOEFL) but some lecturers avoid the too tactical reading topics like recycle process, engineering, chemistry etcetera, and some lecturers concerned the with basic reading and more on general one like what is said by one of the following lecturer (LR 5) "more on general English some specific and sometimes in terms of local genius."

Question 4: Suggestions regarding on teaching-learning process, the lecturers suggested using different methods and techniques during the class, it can be varied from ordinary reading to audiovisual etcetera, the group work activities is also necessary beside the individual task and activities, the open dialogue and discussion is might be also useful to enrich the English reading material based on local culture in order to get more sharing

and understanding about the material. The method which is usually applied and used by the lecturers from their previous experience are vary, from conventional lecture, through mobile phone apps like WhatsApp, audiovisual aids, individual, small groups, and whole groups, this is to anticipate and to minimize the boredom among students and learners, like the following quote from one of the lecturer (LR 5): “we use all methods, lectures, roleplay, I was listening while the students reading, and naturally the reading subject is the boring subject and when we use a monotonous methods, in this overall three hours learning in every meeting it will be feel too long”.

Development of cognitive skills and active role, the lecturers think about the positive effect of learning English reading based on local culture will make the students developed their English reading skills, the will recall and dig up knowledge about their local culture especially about South Sulawesi Culture (Bugis-Makassar-Mandar-Toraja), the lecturer suggests that through English reading based on local culture and the improvement in students' activeness and participation, great attitudes towards the course in a positive way, there should be also the motivation, student centered education is believed to be effective in making learning process meaningful and great learning for the students.

Question 4: in English literature department at Adab Faculty UIN Aladdin Makassar, there is still no book works, actually there is a module which is developed, and it is named “stylish (Students Learning Integrated System) which is developed by lecturers including all the clues in it like mutual review among lecturers unfortunately this is not eligible and available for all subjects and this is also because it is the new subject in the department, but for one lecturer like LR 3 she added some additional worksheets to be done by the learners/students. “yes, special material, the additional material from ebook I attached kind of worksheets to be answers and done by the students to develop material I also use internet regularly as the references, that's all.

In learning English reading subject based on local culture and wisdom engaging emotional and social skills via group work activities and most of the participants will feel the positive effect of group work activities on the development of their social and interpersonal relationship, emotional and affective skills, any of them reported that group work activities led to cooperative learning which helped them develop their self-confidence, autonomy and made them feel stronger, the students will feel to be more respected and cherished, and it will make the learning environment is more interesting , the learners will also feel improved, and will trigger their motivation towards learning.

The lecturers think the activities in English reading based on local culture will help the learners/students to respect each other's ideas, and these activities will encourage them get to know each other better, help them to become aware of each other, socialize and build better and effective communication, empathy building skills. The following two quotations exemplify these views: “English reading based on local culture will enables the passive students to become active in class and develop their self-confidence like shown in the following quotes “English reading material based on local culture will express oneself effectively, respecting to and listening to the ideas of others patiently, becoming aware of different interests and skills in oneself, practical, actual and realistic” (LR 1, LR 2, LR 3 , LR 4, LR 5).

The research findings by also support the positive effect of English reading material based on local culture. Likewise, the learning structure of grouping students is believed to lead to higher self-esteem and better communication skills. The above stated views of the participants are also) views on learning who consider learning as an embedded process affected by the learners' identity and social position in an ongoing system of social relations. They believe that learning is a social process taking place between embedded learners within that specific context. They indicated that English reading based on local culture provides students with the ‘learning by doing’ experience which makes learning permanent adding that taking an active role continuously helps students to learn.

This should be a course to ensuring local culture knowledge through learning English reading. It is to gain the knowledge, the knowledge we gathered were permanent” (LR 4). “It wasn't a class where teacher came in and lectured and students passively listened to teacher. It was a class where students actively shared knowledge, ideas and criticized each other using the time effectively. With this approach, we reached to vast knowledge in short time and meaningful, it was us doing the job and the teacher just the facilitator” (LR 4).

The lecturer suggests to keep the learning prioritize on students' centered education, they are also believed to be effective in making the learning process meaningful and permanent for the students in most of the recent studies. The lecturers emphasized the ‘interactive learning’ aspect of the student centered instruction, they believed this was achieved through providing students with a discussion environment where there was always an exchange of knowledge and ideas through individual, collaborative, cooperative and group work activities which produced many ideas and thoughts, they lecturers feel that these will help students develop learning without ignoring their local culture as stated by the LS 4: “We learnt how to produce and share new ideas through group work activities and this helped us develop different angles to look at issues”. Similar where students also stated that they became aware of other perspectives within the group. Lecturers also think that interaction helped create an enjoyable learning environment to be more unique, the lecturers state regarding on

student centered learning that enable the students to learn and still feel comfortable, it also make the lecturers feel they can discuss what they are feeling or they may have, their own culture, the English reading comprehension, and also able to fulfill the curriculum demands.

The lecturer are optimist that English reading material based on local culture will help the learners/students to learn and develop their English reading skills while understanding more about their own culture, It enabled students to learn and keep them the close to the root of their own local culture like the following quote: "I have learnt how to learn the content and the concepts and how to studying on English reading while studying about my own culture". The lecturers also said that student centered instruction increases the interest and willingness towards crucial learning factors in learning how to learn English reading material based on local culture helps build a relationship between English academic reading material learning and the students identity, it makes the students/learners to elaborated on the idea of learning English reading and also help them to develop their knowledge about their local culture, it is can be seen from the following comments: "The knowledge we learnt in the course are not only used in class but also in real social life which makes it more meaningful" (LR 5). Suggestions on Learning Environment of English reading material based on local culture that can be seen from the data on how to run the course environment, the learning the appropriate EFL material and local culture, the lecturers suggested that lessons should be more learner centered and The learner centered teaching methods and techniques should be implemented in classroom

Question 5: The goals of the learning of reading based on the department targets are to lead students to the critical reading to try to read and understand the English language texts, not just take the texts as it is but also evaluate the strength and the weakness of the reading material topics, the aspects which is needed to be developed and especially for the advanced students (of higher semesters) the TOEFL and IELTS reading are introduced to make them familiar. For first year students, they are hoped to be able to understand the basic and simple reading and gradually after they are improved they will able to write apply their reading skills for academic writing purposes, the learners/students understand how to highlighted the main ideas and to take the gist information from the reading texts.

Questions 6: Suggestions on designing the content of English reading material based on local culture should be arranged according to the interests and real conditions of the students: "I would select the topics more from the daily social life together with the students and I would rather select the topics that would give students opportunities to experience real life problems in daily life conditions". Some of them reported that the course of English reading based on local culture should be designed in collaboration with the learners. According to the assumptions of the Learner-centered Model learning is a constructive process that occurs best when what is being learnt is relevant and meaningful to the learner, also stated that instead of students learning material that has no relevance to them or their lives, they need to have the opportunity to learn and use knowledge that directly relates to the students every day and real life context' and local culture and wisdom in English reading material can be one of the solution. These suggestions are in line with the following characteristics of constructivist learning environment.

Theme 5: The lecturers perceptions about the English reading material based on local culture, all the lecturers responded positively on the ideas because this is very limited both in numbers and quality, and they feel that this is essentials and important, the students will also facilitated because they already have the prior knowledge related to that aspect, in short it is great idea, the students also will feel easier to develop their reading abilities because they are reading and later on able to write their own culture. lecturers suggested that the lecturer and students should be more active, provide more feedback and practical assignments to keep the students active and keep the students focus and attention toward the material given like shown in the following quote: "I think teacher has to give more importance to individual activities to be able to evaluate students better individually as well and has to provide more feedback on the activities".

Some modification and adaptation should be made in the course, lecturers said that there should be modification and adaptation made in the course because local culture is quite different from the general authentic material but the local culture material can also be enjoyable lesson as reported in: "If I were given the opportunity, I wouldn't change anything regarding the course because this was the only lesson I attended with a great pleasure without getting bored at all".

Question 7: The lecturers perceptions on the most effective and efficient media in learning reading materials, the material is given before the meeting ran to let the students/learners to be more understand and comprehend the reading materials and topic before the class, this is also enable them not to waste tie in the classrooms, sometimes computer assisted reading material is also great, and one of the lecturers argued that the students nowadays will not sufficient enough with the conventional ways of learning of teaching including in the reading subject like we can see in the following quote: "The students nowadays no longer need to be offered the conventional models of learning because they come from different generation (millennial) and all needs audiovisual aids, we also need to improvise.

IV. DISCUSSION

Findings of the study revealed that the lecturers have a positive perceptions on the English reading material based on local culture , It was indicated by that the English reading material based on local culture used during the course helped students develop their reflective, critical, local culture knowledge, recall their prior-knowledge related to local culture based on their experience and based on the information they acquired from the books and internet, The students read the units, answers the questions, listen to the lecturer's explanation, they also researching, analyzing and synthesizing the knowledge and related information about the materials given as the additional points. The lecturers also will learn while doing and interacting with students and their colleagues about this, and this also generates variation in perspectives, enjoyment in the classrooms, and also self-confidence of being themselves, these experiences create a constant learning environment and will help students and lecturers to learn, The students also able to increase their interaction, social awareness, empathy, self-esteem, and affective skills.

The lecturers who use English reading material will help the students to develop and build up the students' self-confidence on their own local culture, autonomy, reading skills which in return increased their intrinsic motivation towards learning. This approach was also believed to improve their friendship and communication skills since they practiced to respect and accept others' ideas and harmony neighborhood among their local ethnic groups and culture (Makassarese, Buginese, Mandar, and Toraja) through group work activities and the local material in every units of English reading materials and exercises, it also enable them to increase their self-expression and empathy, and solidarity among them, This gives the lecturers the role as a facilitator and keep the students to be more active in their own learning, while the role of the student is emphasized and is expected to take an active role and develop new knowledge, skills and sensibilities to be able to face and dealing with the changing needs, the lecturers are hoped to be capable of educating learners and giving the learners with kills to manage the demands of the changing world and the local culture/local wisdom preservation at the same time, the teacher should be able to deal with each student individually, provide the sufficient time and feedback to his/her learners.

Based on the rule by the Ministry of Education of Indonesia, local culture should be maintained and preserved and English reading material based on local culture enable each student develops their English reading skills while preserving and keep their own local culture as the local identity as part of a nation pride. A lecturer who are implementing the local culture in learning EFL is expected to take these differences into account and also apply their teaching according to the needs and of individual students, the lecturers have developed a more critical eye towards their role in teaching in learning-teaching English reading material based on local culture, They should believe that these all these requires them to take an active role before the lesson while preparing the context for the lesson, during the lesson for assisting the group work activities and after the lesson for providing individual and collective feedback for all the performances, the lecturers also have to be aware of the roles they are expected during and after the English reading material based on local culture teaching and learning,. Liu (2008) also emphasizes this shows and also challenge the lecturer's extra awareness and curiosity to enrich he/her prior knowledge and local literacy to apply and implement the English reading material based on local culture.

They indicated that there are some barriers to make that change such as the time it takes teachers to learn and implement the English reading material based on local culture, the great thing about this is they feel familiar to the materials given to them and also it gives the homage and warm learning environment all of which are also can be seen by the participants of the this study as well, As a result of this study, the following points need to be considered while designing a student centered learning curriculum: Both the individual and the cooperative role expected in teaching-learning English reading material based on local culture, the lecturers also need to be carefully integrated all topics into the activities to minimize the gap between local culture, English reading material based on local culture and curriculum goal.

The role of English reading material based on local culture for lecturers seems need the extra, so lecturers need to make sure whether they are ready and willing to do it well. Thus, the role of lecturers are to identity of the students' need to be very clearly designed in the curriculum and lecturers are ready about it, The teaching-learning activities to be integrated into the curriculum need to keep up to the needs, interests and preferences of the students or learners in order to acquire and to process knowledge easier based on the relevancy and meaningful learning material, to implement the activities effectively, the classroom or the learning environment need to facilitate the needs of all students , Inefficiency in the classrooms will affect into the implementation of the learners, the classroom needs to be reconsidered and adjustments need to be made sure, the lecturers need to be realized and integrated into the curriculum and also to provide permanent learning and learning, to make sure learn opportunities and empowerment for the students. This integration will contribute to students' cognitive, affective and social development as well as their local culture literacy and understanding. The course content also needs to be designed to meet the students' academic and their students' local culture and local wisdom literacy.

V. CONCLUSION

The overall participated of English lecturers agree that English reading materials based on local culture is a great idea and necessary to be taught in EFL, they agreed that it will help the students to learn English while preserving their own culture and identity, they also felt that the idea of using local culture in EFL and ESL is an interesting thing to be done and to be carried on.

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