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**AND** (Language and Art) **EDUCATION:**  
**Unity and Harmony in Diversity**



FACULTY OF LANGUAGES

# Proceeding

## International Seminar on Multiculturalism and (Languages and Arts) Education

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By Ash-Shaff

All articles in the Proceeding of **International Seminar on Multiculturalism and (Languages and Arts) Education** are not the official opinions and standings of editors. Contents and consequences resulted from the articles are sole responsibilities of individual writers

## Words from the Dean

*Assalaamu'alaikum warohmatullahi wabarokatuh*

Multiculturalism is one of the critical issues in the world, especially in relation to education. Criticism about relation between multiculturalism and education is very important, because through education the spirit of unity in diversity as people's ideology can be improved. Throughout education too, young people will generate good understanding and skills about living harmony in diversity, and the multicultural nation's character will be established. So, the seminar about multiculturalism and its relation to language and art education is very necessary to carry out

This proceeding is a record of the precious thoughts and insights discussed in the seminar. I hope it will be useful as a reference for those who are interested in studying and exploring about this field any further.

As the Dean of Faculty of Languages and Arts, it is one of my more pleasant duties to congratulate all presenters who have contributed their papers and to the committee who have worked hard to make this proceeding completed.

*Wassalaamu'alaikum warohmatullahi wabarokatuh.*



## Foreword of the Chairman

Since we were very young we have been told about *Bhineka Tunggal Ika*. Everyone in this country knows it very well that unity in diversity is the symbol of this multicultural country. This symbol decorates almost every room in our schools and offices. It beautifies the houses of the people. It appears in text books, stories, poetry, songs, saga, paintings, plays, dances, soap operas. Ironically, almost every day we watch through the media or right in the front of our eyes these ethnical riots, clashes, fights, conflicts based on intolerance, hatred, fanaticism and prejudices. Some people we love, most of them are innocent, die or lose their lovers or precious properties for nothings. They are victims of bias, misunderstanding, chauvinism, bigotry. What is wrong with us? We gathered in the seminar on Multiculturalism and Education to talk about this: To talk about why this should happen in our lives. Is that because we have not understood the essence of multiculturalism well or whether we only understand it superficially. How then we should make ourselves and the future generations understand the essence of multiculturalism?

On behalf of the committee I would like express our special appreciation to Prof. Ahmad Fedyani from UI, Dr. Molokolunthu from Malaya University, Prof. Sofyan Salam from Makasar State University, Dr. Endo Suwanda from Bandung Arts Community, Dr. Laurent Criquet from the French Embassy, Dr. Guido Schnieders from DAAD, Dr. Yahya Wijaya from Dutawacana University, Dr. Syamsiyatun from UIN, Dr. Widya Nayati from Gadjah Mada University, Prof. Suyata, Prof. Hanum, Prof. Nurhayati from Yogyakarta State University, Mr. Orine Stephney from Guyana, and Mr. Kyong Hun Son from Korea, who in spite of the tight schedule have fulfilled our request to share their insight with us by writing their ideas and presented them in this proceeding. Our special thanks also go to YSU Rector, and the Dean of the Faculty of Languages and Arts for the opportunity, trust and support without which the seminar and the proceeding will not be completed. I am also grateful to all the seminar participants who have paid special attention and commitment to be parallel presenters and moderators.

There were 12 papers of the invited speakers presented in both keynote speech session and 4 panel sessions, and approximately 45 papers were presented in the parallel sessions. Almost all of the presented papers are included in this proceeding. In line with the parallel sessions, this proceeding is grouped into at least 5 study areas namely general multiculturalism, teaching/education, language, literature and arts.

We should apologize for the discontentment and inconvenience that the committee has caused you in regards to both the seminar and proceeding. I hope this proceeding will give you deeper insight about multiculturalism and its application in language and arts education.

Widyastuti Purbani  
Chairman

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## Promoting Multiculturalism in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

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### Abstract

*Teaching-learning is one of the cultural processes that takes place in a classroom as a social context. Teaching-learning English as foreign language in a classroom, therefore, is a multicultural process in which the students have their own first and or second languages and they interact with one another. Language itself is an important aspect of people's culture. Besides, each student in a class has his own individual differences and unique characteristics: socio-economic cultural background, first language, personality, feeling, behaviour, learning style, religion, ethnicity, custom, age, and habit. The students' socio-economic cultural differences have implications for their behaviours in the classroom and, therefore, these differences among the students do take on a role in the classroom.*

*Based on the fact above, the teachers or lecturers teaching English as a foreign language attended by students from various tribes, races, and regions , even countries (like that at Yogyakarta State University) must become culturally receptive by making connections with their students as individuals and understanding cultural contexts influencing their interactions. They must promote multicultural awareness in their teaching to manage their students' individual differences as an inclusive cultural process where no one is left out. However, it does not mean that all cultural contributions from the students are of equal value and social worth and must be tolerated.*

*To promote multiculturalism in teaching English as a foreign language, it is suggested that the teachers or lecturers 1) know who the students are; 2) conduct a multicultural day; 3) insert multiculturalism as a hidden curriculum in each subject matter; and 4) conduct cooperative learning as one of their teaching models.*

**Keywords:** multiculturalism, teaching-learning, individual differences

## A. Introduction

A teaching-learning process in a classroom is such a structured multicultural society in miniature. It is structured because it is a small community merely consisting of a teacher and a number of students. It is also multicultural as it consists of a group of students having different socio-economic cultural background and interacting with one another. They have their own unique characteristics as individuals. It is more multicultural, furthermore, if it takes place in higher educations -universities, in which the students attending the class are from various tribes, races, regions, or even countries.

As other teaching-learning processes, teaching-learning English as a foreign language in a classroom is a multicultural process as a social context. The students have their own first or second language and they learn another language, English. Learning a language means learning a culture belonging to its native speakers. A language itself is a cultural product of its native speakers. In understanding the target language, in this case English, the students are strongly influenced by knowledge and experiences of their own first or second language and their socio-economic background. These differences among the students do take on a role in the classroom (Worrell, 2009).

Therefore, the teachers or lecturers teaching English as a foreign language in a classroom attended by students having different socio-economic cultural background from various tribes, races, and regions, even countries (like that at Yogyakarta State University) must be culturally aware and become receptive by making connections with their students as individuals and understanding cultural contexts influencing their interactions. It is a difficult task for teachers and lecturers as they are faced with language and behavioral barriers of multicultural populations, and already crowded academic schedules. They must be able to adapt, learn and teach about cultures through the target language (Lacombe, ...: 2). To overcome this complicated fact, the teachers and lecturers teaching English as a foreign language must be able to promote multicultural awareness among the students in their teaching to manage their students' individual differences as an inclusive cultural process where no one is left out. However, it does not mean that all cultural contributions from the students are of equal value and social worth and must be tolerated.

## B. Discussion

As stated before, activities of teaching-learning English in a classroom are one of the multicultural processes in a small structured society. The teachers and lecturers are faced with difficult tasks that they have to multi culturally face and accommodate students' individual differences in their teaching activities on the one hand, and they must be able to accomplish the teaching goals as stated in the curriculum on the other hand. However, this fact must not be a problem, especially when they take into consideration that multicultural processes in education -in a classroom, are all about plurality of the students.

Baptiste in Gay (<http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/educatrs/leadrshp/le0gay.htm>) states that institutionalizing a philosophy of cultural pluralism within the educational system is grounded in principles of equality, mutual respect, acceptance and understanding, and moral commitment to social justice. It does not mean that the teachers or lecturers have to thoroughly learn each student's culture. The idea is that they accept and understand individual differences. Baptiste's thought is in accordance with Rosado that defines multiculturalism as a system of beliefs and behaviors that recognizes and respects the presence of all diverse groups in an organization or society, acknowledges and values their socio-cultural differences, and encourages and enables their continued contribution within an inclusive cultural context which empowers all within the organization or society. The

organization or society in this context is an English class consisting of a teacher and a number of students coming from different socio-economic background. (<http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/papers/caleb/multicultural.html>). The objectives of multicultural awareness in the classroom are that the students are able to 1) recognize and prize diversity; 2) develop greater understanding of cultural patterns; 3) respect individuals of all cultures in the class; 4) develop positive and productive interaction among students and among experiences of diverse cultural groups; and 5) understand the historical, political, and economic basis of current inequalities (Fantini, 1995: 42).

The English teachers and lecturers' task, therefore, is to make their students aware that the individual differences among them exist in the class and they must understand with one another. To accomplish this task, the English teachers and lecturers must be able to promote multicultural awareness among the students. Therefore, it is suggested that the English teachers and lecturers 1) know who the students are; 2) conduct a multicultural day; 3) insert multiculturalism as a hidden curriculum in each subject matter; and 4) conduct cooperative learning as one of their teaching models.

### 1. Knowing who the students are

It is important to know who the students are, and their characteristic backgrounds such as their age, sex, nationality, English background, social background, economic background, interest, and the number of students (Hutchinson and Waters (1987: 53-63). In line with Hutchinson and Waters, McNeil and Wiles (1990: 79) state that a good beginning for teachers is to find out some general information about their students (e.g., ethnic and family background, family status, parents' level of schooling, religious orientations, and soon ... .

Having known who the students are, the teachers and lecturers of English will be able to appropriately deal with and treat the students during their teaching-learning processes. Besides, the teachers and lecturers, in the orientation, can tell the students that they are from different socio-economic cultural backgrounds. Simultaneously, the teachers and lecturers make them aware their individual differences and direct them to multi culturally understand with one another. It can be done by giving them to culturally introduce themselves in turns. Knowing who the students are is also closely related to adopting, adapting, selecting, or creating materials culturally relevant to the students -part 3 ("Inserting multiculturalism as a hidden curriculum in each subject matter" that will be discussed in details).

Therefore, in the first meeting or in the first few days of school as Airisian (1990) proposes, the teachers or lectures of English are responsible for

- a. observing about range of information about individual pupils and the class as a group,
- b. abstracting useful and relevant data from all the stimuli available,
- c. combining these with his or her own expectations, beliefs, and attitudes, and
- d. arriving at the judgment about individual pupils, the class, and approaches which will form the classroom society and allow instruction to begin.

If the teachers and lecturers can accomplish their responsibilities in identifying their students in the first meeting, they will be able to generally determine appropriate learning materials. However, they should continuously pay attention to and identify their



students' characteristics as they are human beings and they are dynamic. The teachers or lecturers' observations on the first day will only catch students' surface characteristics they should continue observing the students in the following classes. Accomplishing these tasks, the teachers and lecturers of English also have a role in restructuring the system of education in such a way as to provide educational opportunities to match the characteristics and needs of all groups within the populations related to the subject matters.

## 2. Conducting a multicultural day

Conducting a multicultural day at the beginning of the semester or the academic year is worth taking into consideration by decision makers such as rectors, deans, or principles and the ones on charge of teaching-learning process, teachers and lecturers. It sounds strange. However, it is worth conducting due to students' individual differences. Recently, some school and universities, Yogyakarta State University for example, are attended by students coming from various tribes, ethnicities, races, regions, and even countries. Every year, Yogyakarta State University is attended by foreign students coming from various countries -*Dharmasiswa* Program and students coming from *Kemitraan Negara Berkembang (KNB)* -*developing country cooperation*.

The fact above shows that education in Indonesia becomes more multicultural. The fact supports the idea to conduct a multicultural day. At Yogyakarta State University, it is called an international day on which the students coming from *Dharmasiswa* Program and *Kemitraan Negara Berkembang (KNB)* perform their own culture. The students wear their clothes originally from their countries or even those originally from their regions. Besides, they cook and serve their special food/snack/beverage or their staple food. The participants and also attendants taste other participants' food/snack/beverage. In this occasion, they are also allowed or even suggested performing their culture, singing songs, playing drama, playing music, and soon.

On that international day, the institution -Yogyakarta State University promotes cultural awareness among the students. The institution only facilitates and the students do the agenda. They will steps by steps understand others' socio-economic cultural pluralism within different backgrounds. It is in accordance with Osler in Okeke (2009) who states that the needs for young people to address and discuss matters of culture in ways in which different cultural perspectives can be freely and sensibly considered without fear of rancour; not to accept one culture as wholly good or wholly bad but that there are many different cultures to be respected and understood.

In a class, a multicultural day can be simply conducted in the few first days. It can be done by asking students to wear their traditional clothes and also to perform their culture. The simplest one is that the students should present their own cultural heritage in front of the class. This special occasion will give opportunities to all the students to understand with another. Therefore misunderstanding individual differences resulting from different socio-economic cultural backgrounds, even from various countries can be minimized. These events or ideas are in accordance with Worrell (2009) stating that a great way to learn about the different cultural backgrounds that school personnel have is to establish a "multicultural lunch and cultural awareness day" at the beginning of the school year. Besides, educators themselves must become culturally receptive by making connections with their students as individuals while also understanding the cultural

contexts that influence their interactions (Worrell, 2009). The teachers and lecturers must also understand that “not all students/children of any given age have learned the same things; they cannot all be taught in the same place, much less the same things, at the same time” (Kauffman et al. in Worrell, 2009).

### 3. Inserting multiculturalism as a hidden curriculum in each subject matter

In promoting multiculturalism in education, teaching English, as other subject matters, does not mean teaching cultures belonging to the students. However, inserting multiculturalism in each subject matter in teaching English as a foreign language is highly recommended because teaching languages is closely related to cultures. Without considering multiculturalism, the English teachers and lecturers neglect their students' individual differences. Okeke (2009) states that a curriculum, which shows no recognition to the cultural values of a people, appears to be laid on a path incompatible with the sociology of learning that is aimed at sustaining the socio-cultural development of any society. It implies that English teaching materials should consider and insert multiculturalism as a hidden curriculum in each subject matter (using cultural pluralism to teach other academic subjects and intellectual skills).

Therefore, the English teachers and lecturers need to provide the students with educational opportunities to understand others' individual differences. Besides, they need to formulate lesson plans inserting multicultural awareness relevant to the students in an attempt to provide sensitivity to global perspective, pluralism, and the celebration of differences while embracing cultural similarities. In this case, the students are taught content using instructional methods that value cultural knowledge and differences. It means that the teachers and lecturers promote the transformation of the educational process to reflect the ideals of democracy in a pluralistic society, English class consisting of a number of students (<http://www.newhorizons.org/strategies/multicultural/hanley.htm>).

In inserting multiculturalism as a hidden curriculum in teaching English as a foreign language, the teaching material can thematic related to the students' backgrounds. The themes of the English teaching materials can be *Caring and Sharing*, *World Famous Stories* related to students' origin, *World Famous People*, *Local Customs*, etc. (Mee, 1996: 194). Through these themes, the English teachers and lectures are able to insert cross cultural understanding. English language class is ideal for cross cultural education, since the subject provides the students with discussions of everyday issues and the language, English, provides a common medium of expression to talk about these common experiences. Therefore, English is more suitable for creating the negotiation of cultural ideas during the teaching-learning process (Mee, 1996: 201-202).

English, as other languages, is fundamentally used for communication and for expressing and sharing an understanding of people, situations, texts, and ideas. It does not have a set 'content', other than structures and skills, which cannot be studied in a vacuum. Therefore its content can and should be the pupils or students' world. Their daily lives, cultures, environments, hopes and fears, and needs must be involved in what is happening around them in the class during the teaching-learning process (Davis, 1996: 233-234). Furthermore, Gonzalez (1995: 54) states that the 'received' tradition was that language and culture were inseparable, that one had to teach both language and culture, since language itself without contextualization of culture, was merely a code leading to all

kinds of intercultural misunderstanding without the cultural content that necessarily went with idioms, figurative expressions, and larger cultural presuppositions.

In practical teaching-learning English as a foreign language, inserting multiculturalism can be done in reading, writing, and speaking skills.

a. teaching reading

In teaching reading, the teachers and lecturers of English must be able to provide the students with texts about multiculturalism or about cultures belong to the students. In this case, indirectly the teachers and lecturers of English give the students knowledge about culture in order that the students are aware multiculturalism existing among them.

b. teaching writing

In teaching writing, the teachers and lecturers of English must give opportunities to the students to write down compositions on their own language. After that the students presents their writings in front of the class and other pay attention to the presenters. In this case, understating cultures existing among the students can be achieved.

c. teaching speaking

In teaching speaking, the teachers, lecturers, and the students are free to choose topics to discuss. In this occasion, the students are asked to make groups consisting of members from different tribes, races, regions, or countries, at least they have different backgrounds. In the groups the students discuss anything related to cultures, or at least they intensively interact with one another.

#### 4. Conducting *cooperative learning*

Cooperative learning promotes multicultural awareness for the students. They discuss materials and help with one another during the teaching-learning process. Slavin (1995: 2) states that in cooperative classrooms, students are expected to help each other, to discuss and argue with other, to access each other's current knowledge and fill in gaps in each other's understanding. While they are working together in either small or big groups, they will gradually understand all the members of the group. As a result, students' individual differences in a classroom will not become a problem anymore and all members will be able to keep diversity in unity.

#### C. Conclusion

The students in a classroom as a social context are a unique society. They have their own characteristic. Because of this plurality, the teachers or lecturers in teaching English as a foreign language, as other subject matters, must appropriately culturally deal with and treat the students to avoid misunderstanding. It is a hard job for the teachers and lecturers since they have to accomplish the teaching goals simultaneously they are faced with students' individual differences during the teaching learning process.

However, this is a natural phenomenon that human beings, including students are different and unique. Because of that, everyone should realize that they are different but they must be together in a class to meet the teaching-learning objectives. Therefore, it is the teachers and lecturers tasks to promote multicultural awareness among the members of the class in order that all members of the class are able to understand and accept with one another to keep complicated diversity in peaceful unity.

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