

## Teachers' Strategies in the Classroom Setting: Integrating Local Culture into English Language Teaching

Herdi<sup>1</sup>, Ribut Wahyu Eriyanti<sup>2</sup>, Atok Miftakhul Huda<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Program Doktor Pendidikan Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang, Indonesia  
*herdi@unilak.ac.id*

<sup>2</sup> Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang, Indonesia  
*eriyanti@umm.ac.id*

<sup>3</sup> Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang, Indonesia  
*atok@umm.ac.id*

### Abstract:

Integrating local culture into the learning process in class plays an important role in improving students' ability to learn English. This research was aimed at investigating how teachers apply strategies for teaching English by linking local culture to EFL students in the intensive course class. The design used in this research was a type of qualitative approach that was conducted in January 2022. The subject of this research is an English teacher who teaches in the intensive class at one of the higher education levels in Pekanbaru. Then, the data from the observations and interviews were analyzed using narrative inquiry. Based on the results of the interview, the teacher applies information about local culture through eight techniques or strategies: brainstorming, contextualizing topics, conducting class discussions, creating video projects, looking for references or literature, designing lesson syllabuses, selecting textbooks, and drilling topics. As a result, the researcher found that integrating local culture had improved the students' ability to learn English. In conclusion, this study revealed that bringing local culture into English language teaching had a significant effect on the students' ability to learn English with local culture in intensive course classes. During the teaching and learning process, the students not only learned a foreign language but also became aware of preserving their local culture.

**Keywords:** *Classroom Setting, English Language Teaching, Local Culture, Teacher Strategies*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

According to Barfield & Uzarski, (2009) the term culture is difficult to define. It was conceptualized differently. When we hear the word "culture," we automatically think of customs, rituals, norms, beliefs and values. When he has time to think, he starts mentioning specialties such as attitude, art, fashion, food and even traditional cuisine. The word "culture" has a very broad meaning that includes all aspects of human life.

Indonesia is rich in culture and its people must be tolerant of the cultural diversity that exists in its environment. As stated by Choudhury (2014) students are expected to be able to appreciate the differences that exist in society and provide empathy for people of different cultures. In fact, many young people do not understand the culture around them and how they can understand the culture of others if they do not understand their own culture. A lack of understanding of different cultures lead to misinterpretation in society and harm the

harmony of social life. hence, when learning English as a foreign language, it is necessary to provide English classes as a place to learn different cultures. Foreign English Teachers (EFLs) must leverage the learning process to maintain a culture of knowledge for the younger generation. In some cases, from an Indonesian perspective, learning English as a target language is not simply learning the culture of the target language.

Modern methods of teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) or English as a Second Language (ESL) include not only linguistic and grammar-based approaches, but also cross-cultural competence (Cakir, 2006). Learning a language requires not only knowing its structure, vocabulary, and understanding how to use it, but also an awareness of the society in which it is spoken. Students can find out how they can put their language skills to good use this way. Besides, various cultures are a challenging endeavor due to the fact that cultures are not simply understood. In fact, being aware of other cultures is difficult because cultures are difficult for us to comprehend. To put it another way, communication requires an awareness of a language's culture. Misunderstandings might emerge during conversation if pupils neglect it. As a result, a teacher must be able to help pupils gain a better knowledge of the different cultures that speak English as their first language. Culture involves big concepts.

Barfield & Uzarski (2009) states that there are five main elements of culture that can distinguish one culture from another. history, religion, values, social organization and language. A region's history can shape the identity and behavior of its historic owners. Similarly, the influence of religion and values can be found in all aspects of culture, forcing its owners to follow rules. Social organizations such as families, communities, and even governments are a reflection of our culture, and language is a key factor underpinning cultural mediation. Culture can be learned, shared, and transmitted from generation to generation, based on symbols and dynamic integration systems.

According to many experts, motivation is the term most commonly used to describe the success or failure of nearly any complex task. Almost all experts agree that the theory of motivation is concerned with the factors that drive and direct behavior. Furthermore, it is generally accepted that a person's motivation to engage in a particular activity is based on underlying needs (Dornyei. Z., 2005).

Language education cannot be separated from culture since a culture is a part of languages. Language reflects the values of a particular society. Culture is therefore a central part of language teaching. In addition to learning a foreign language, learners also get to know the target culture. Learning a language without knowing the culture aims to change a person who can speak a foreign language without understanding the social, cultural and philosophical aspects of the target culture. Therefore, teaching a foreign language also means taking in knowledge of the target culture. It also leads to cultural complications in foreign language teaching. Therefore, Yanti & Maridi (2019) argues that the language learning process is influenced by culture both linguistically (semantics, pragmatics, discourse) and pedagogically (learning materials with cultural content).

In order to teach English culture to students, cross-cultural aspects in foreign language teaching should be recognized by the teachers. Therefore, teachers need to know

how to convey culture in language lessons. Then he can apply it to his lessons and help his students become competent cross-culturally. Raharja et al., (2022) states that there are some challenges that English teachers face in incorporating English culture into the classroom. These issues relate to how the necessary cultural information is provided or taught. This is because students are often unaware while the teachers are explaining the cultural aspects of the target language (Preszler. J. et. al., 2006).

Additionally, there was several researches conducted related to local culture that emphasize the importance of integrating local culture and goals into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. Research by Octavia et al., (2023); Rizky, (2020) and Rizky & Zainil (2021) are focused on exploring strategies used by teachers as cultural managers and demonstrates that successful implementation of teaching strategies is able to make students motivated and eager to learn English.

In addition, research by Romrome & Ena (2022) emphasizes the use of local culture in teaching English, improving students' thinking, speaking and writing skills. They found that the integration of local cultural content improved students' English skills and interest in learning English. On the other hand, Arsiyana et al., (2023 and Atay & Kurt (2010) show the importance of integrating local cultures in EFL learning, as it provides meaningful experiences for learners and builds self-esteem their beliefs when exposed to language. Research shows that learning English should not replace the learner's own culture but should complement it, stimulating motivation and interest in the language

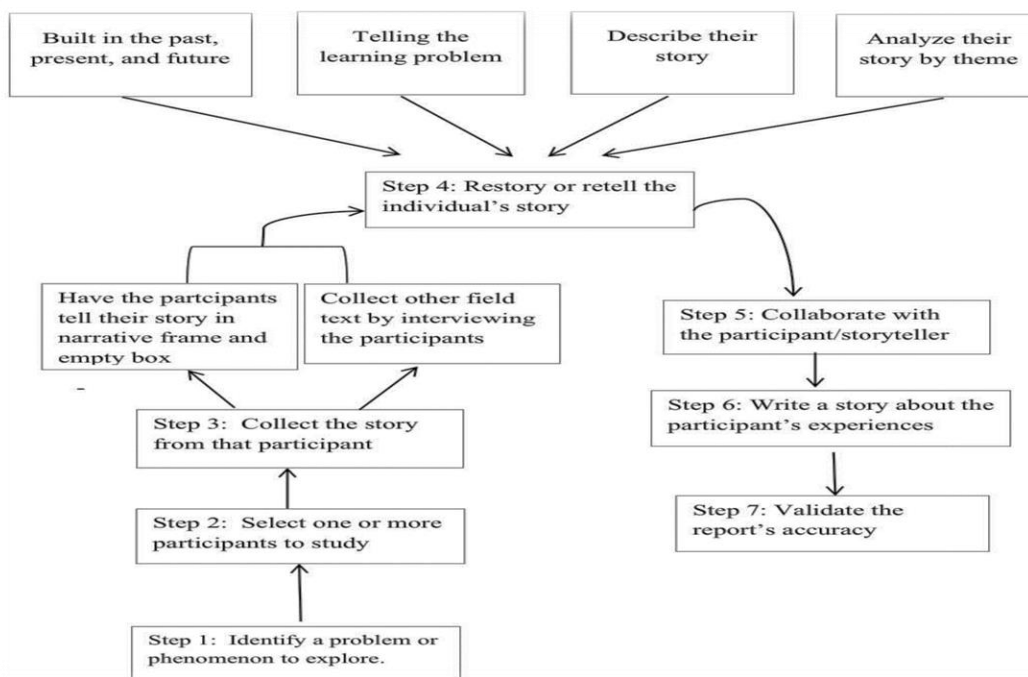
Regarding these previous researches, the researcher wanted to know what strategies that English teachers have employed in teaching EFL students in the learning process of learning English in an intensive course while incorporating local culture. This study was important because This research was conducted one of the higher education levels in Pekanbaru. Besides, the researchers expect that this study can inspire other teachers to develop more interesting teaching strategies.

## 2. METHOD

This study is a qualitative study which was designed to get better understand the meanings and behaviors experienced in the context of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) with a focus on local culture in the accelerated classroom. According to Sugiyono (2017) a qualitative research is a form of systematic empirical inquiry into meaning.

Therefore, the research was conducted at the intensive class in one of the higher education levels in Pekanbaru. Data collection involves two methods such as observations and interviews. Therefore, the researcher is the key instrument of collecting the data. Observations were used to measure teacher and student behavior and learning processes, while interviews were conducted with the participants to gather their perceptions and teaching and learning strategies. Materials are used to study written documents related to the research topic.

The data collected were analyzed using narrative inquiry and a systematic approach to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' experiences. Besides, these following steps were conducted:

**Figure 1.** Technique of Data Analysis

In other hand, to ensure reliability and validity, researchers used triangulation and member checks and compared observational data with interview.

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The research findings were then analyzed based on the data obtained from the interview and the observation process as follows:

#### 3.1. The Evaluation in Understanding the Strategies

For the first question, the researcher wanted to know about teacher's perception about teaching strategies in the teaching and learning process by containing local culture in intensive course class, also, the researcher wanted to know what teaching materials are prepared.

##### Excerpt 1:

".....I think it's a must, it's a must for all efl teacher all efl lecture to integrate local culture in teaching and learning process since it has been the world issue ....."

##### Excerpt 2:

".....As a lecture we prepare the material first so mm every meeting we must teach base on the given syllabus based on the lesson plan on every meeting yes, umm.. usually umm.. I prepare the material I and I also search something before teaching...."

Based on the excerpt 1, it can be concluded that the teacher concerned is of the opinion that strategic techniques in incorporating local culture into the teaching and learning process in English classes are very important, because this is a current issue in the world.

Yet, based on excerpt 2, it can be assumed that the researcher known that the teacher has several preparation materials to be used in the teaching and learning process in the classroom, such as the given syllabus based on the lesson plan and the teacher also searches material related to the topic using the internet before starting the class, the lecturer masters the material well so that the students can understand the lesson easily.

### 3.2. The Strategies Used in Intensive Course Class

In this phase, the researcher wanted to ask the teacher's opinion about the strategies affect students in the teaching and learning process for students in the intensive course class. Also, the kind of strategies that teacher used to improve student ability in learning English with local culture at the intensive course class.

#### Excerpt 3:

“.....Yaaaa, some strategies was very influencial...The more approved strategies reused the better students get understanding about the EFL materials integrated into local culture, so, the lecture you know who has a good right intentions integrated local culture must have some purpose strategies....”

#### Excerpt 4:

“...So many strategies ...first brainstorming the topics when the recent topic in my class for example the topic works so I will brainstorm the topic into local target... the second is contextualizing the topic you know mm I love doing this when the recent topic its must contextualizing into 3 cultures and one of them is local culture. Then, conducting classroom discussion. Also, conducting classroom discussion I often you know give the students the classroom discussion by highlighting local culture ..... video project containing the information about local culture okay they use English as a tools in the medium of learning, but they also the contents is all about culture one of them is local culture...and I was asking the students to searching references or literature from internet related to the given topic, can be related to the local culture target and also global culture, and is the most important parts is designing syllabus and lesson plan containing local culture is also important.... The book that I have selected to my students is more about representative of all people of all culture... I aslo drilling topics and drilling the given material yes asking them many times to see reminding them.....”

From the excerpt 3, the teacher argued that several strategies affected the teaching and learning process of students in the intensive course class by linking local culture such as the lecturer concerned using brainstorming, contextualizing, conducting classroom discussions, asking students to make a video project, searching references or literature from the internet. , designing syllabus lesson plan containing local culture, selecting text book and also drilling the topics it's a very good affect the students.

Moreover, related to the excerpt 4, the researcher found that there are 8 types of strategies used by MW lecturers in learning English by linking local culture in the intensive course class, the first is using the brainstorming the topic strategy where the lecturer provides knowledge about local culture on each topic that will be discussed. studied in class by

brainstorming, the second strategy is contextualizing the topic such as contextualizing the topic into 3 cultures, namely local culture, target culture, and global culture but the teacher always highlights the local culture in his class, then the lecturer uses a strategy conducting classroom discussion where lecturers always give orders to students to express opinions or give assignments by linking local culture, the fourth strategy is making video presentations where students can link local culture into their video presentations, after that the lecturer also uses the strategy of searching references or literature so that students use the internet as a place to find new information or new knowledge about local culture so as to add to their insight, the sixth strategy of the lecturers is designing a syllabus or what is called a lesson plan by linking local culture, besides that lecturers also use textbooks as learning media in the process of learning and teaching English by linking local culture in the intensive course class, and the last strategy is that the lecturer uses the driving strategy, this aims to continue to train students' memory so that they do not forget the topics they have learned.

### **3.3. The Factors Influenced in Intensive Course Class**

The researcher aims to investigate the factors influencing lecturers' utilization of the English teaching and learning strategy that incorporates local culture in intensive course classes. Additionally, they seek to understand the specific steps employed by teachers when implementing this strategy. The strengths and weaknesses of the strategy implemented in the English teaching and learning process, with an emphasis on linking local culture, are also of interest to the researcher.

Furthermore, the researcher intends to gather the teacher's perspective on student reactions and assessments regarding the use of these strategies. Additionally, the challenges faced by teachers when integrating this strategy into intensive course classes are to be examined.

The researcher also desires to understand the teacher's personal opinion on the most influential strategy in the teaching and learning process of intensive course classes. Furthermore, the researcher wishes to explore how lecturers handle students who struggle to comprehend the teaching strategies implemented in these classes.

Finally, the researcher aims to ascertain whether the strategy devised by the teacher effectively guides students in enhancing their English language proficiency while preserving their local culture. Lastly, the researcher seeks to uncover the message that the teacher wishes to convey to future teachers who will be instructing English classes.

#### **Excerpt 5:**

“..The advantages of ICT, I consider it as a factors is like determining factors that support my strategy ....”

#### **Excerpt 6:**

“...I will think it over what should I give to them activated my prior knowledge and I also reading al lot I read first, I collect information first , if I want to implemented successful of course I must be good first....”

**Excerpt 7:**

“.. The strengths of course...they become knowledgeable in telling the local culture telling about target and global culture and then as the one people that have own culture , they find such as weakness mereka *menemukan semacam kesadaran oh iya ya mam ...* it was infected our culture... the weakness for implementation the strategy it was because.. I have very limited space to explore students’ capacity students potential that my problem because of the online environment”

**Excerpt 8:**

“...They say it was interesting, we love this mam we get the new, we love the way you teach that’s the students reaction.....”

**Excerpt 9:**

“...I think it’s the same question *dengan* weakness it was because online environment classroom now I have very limited expression to describe .....

**Excerpt 10:**

“...This was all... that all things gave the good contribution in learning English particularly in intensive course class.....”

**Excerpt 11:**

“...I will clarify by *japri* or personal chat and I often say if you did not understand please ask me in personal message and I always reply my students chats .....

**Excerpt 12:**

“...Yes .... student can feel the effect student have the good positive reaction students also feel the improvement .....

**Excerpt 13:**

“...They must be integrated in local culture, they must. I will not say they should but they must since in the globalization era.....”

Additionally, in this research, the researcher focuses on the strategies employed by teachers in the teaching and learning process for EFL students who are learning English containing local culture in an intensive course class in one of the higher education levels in Pekanbaru.

Through interviews and observations, the researcher obtained valuable data and presents concise descriptions of the findings. One notable strategy employed by teachers is brainstorming, where they encourage students to share their ideas and opinions on new material. This technique allows for a quick exchange of thoughts without the need for extensive analysis. This finding was supported by Arsiyana et al., (2023); Atay & Kurt (2010) & Herdi et al., (2022) explain that learning English should not replace the learner's own culture but should complement it, stimulating motivation and interest in the language. By actively participating in spontaneous discussions, students build their enthusiasm and confidence in speaking English with a local cultural context.

Another strategy similar to brainstorming is contextualizing topics into three cultures: local culture, target culture, and global culture. However, the emphasis in the classroom is on local culture, aiming to familiarize students with their own cultural

background and distinguish it from others. This approach broadens students' understanding of local culture and is implemented through various instructional techniques. For instance, in a high school CTE (Career and Technical Education) program, plumbing content was integrated into an English course (Herdi, Pratama, et al., 2022).

Furthermore, teachers facilitate classroom discussions where students can express their opinions and ideas related to local culture. They also incorporate video projects, allowing students to incorporate local culture into their presentations. This was in line with the research conducted by Suryani et al. (2020) state that the teacher role as cultural manager was able to influence students' adaptation, awareness and comprehension.

Additionally, teachers encourage students to search for references and literature on the internet, which enhances their understanding of local culture and expands their knowledge. Munawir et al., (2022) emphasize the value of video projects in providing language learners with meaningful practice and effective learning strategies.

In addition to these strategies, teachers design syllabi that integrate local culture and use textbooks as learning resources. Previous study by Romrome & Ena (2022) suggests that the teaches are required to develop and arrange curriculum that are incorporating local culture to empower students' overall ability in learning. They also employ a memory retention strategy, ensuring that students retain the topics they have learned. For instance, a thorough understanding of the nature of literature and its learning process is crucial to literature education.

The responses and perceptions of English learners towards these strategies in the intensive course class, which focus on teaching English containing local culture, have been highly positive. Previous research by Octavia et al., (2023) highlight that the positive response from students means that they are motivated to learn. This was occurred since the teacher considering language and culture as interconnected aspects.

While language learning emphasizes language usage, it often disregards the dynamic interaction among speakers in everyday life. This research aims to improve students' speaking skills while enhancing their understanding of Indonesian culture, specifically the Lampung, Java, Sunda, Padang, and Palembang cultures. By integrating 'Speaking' classes, students are encouraged to communicate while respecting different cultural perspectives.

The teacher's techniques align with the strategy and activities explored in the investigation of teacher strategies for teaching English with local culture to EFL students in the intensive course class. The findings reveal that these techniques have a positive impact on students' ability to learn English with a local cultural context. Notably, the data collected from interviews with teachers in intensive classes differs from previous research.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

This research focuses on the strategies used by English teachers in an intensive classroom to teach English in the local cultural context. Research shows that the strategies used by teachers include brainstorming, contextualizing topics about local culture, leading class discussions focused on local culture, using video projects related to the local culture



not only contribute to a meaningful and enriching learning experience for students, but also promoting cross-cultural understanding and appreciation.

Consequently, this research is a valuable resource for English teachers looking to improve their teaching methods and inspires future teachers to apply innovative strategies to integrate local culture into their classrooms language classes.

## REFERENCES

- Arsiyana, M., Sunahrow, S., & Wibowo, S. E. (2023). Developing An Integrated Local Culture Padlet Based Writing Course Using Systemic Functional Linguistics Genre Based Pedagogy. *Eralingua : Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Asing Dan Sastra*, 7(1). <https://doi.org/10.26858/eralingua.v7i1.37379>
- Atay, D., & Kurt, G. (2010). The socio-educational model of second language acquisition. *The Turkish Context. Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2(2).
- Barfield, S. C., & Uzarski, J. (2009). Integrating Indigenous Cultures into English Language. *English Teaching Forum*.
- Cakir, I. (2006). Developing cultural awareness in foreign language teaching. *Turkish Online: Journal of Distance Education*, 7.
- Choudhury, R. U. (2014). The role of culture in teaching and learning of English as a Foreign Language. *International Journal of Multi-Disciplinary Research*, 1(4).
- Dornyei, Z. (2005). *Motivation and Motivating in the Foreign Language Classroom. Journal. Department of English, Eötvös University 1146 Budapest, Ajtösi Dürer sor 19, Hungary.*
- Herdi, H., Kasriyati, D., & Andriani, R. (2022). Lecturers' Perceptions of Using Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) in Fkip Unilak. *ELT-Lectura*, 9(1), 11–17. <https://doi.org/10.31849/elt-lectura.v9i1.8616>
- Herdi, H., Pratama, V. M., Rizky, R., & Yanti, N. C. F. (2022). Can Frontloading Increased Students Vocabulary Mastery: Using an Educational Strategy to Improve Students' writing Skills. *CENDEKIA: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial, Bahasa Dan Pendidikan*, 2(4), 193–204. <https://doi.org/10.55606/cendekia.v2i4.731>
- Munawir, A., Inayah, N., Firmansyah, N. P., & Huda, N. (2022). Students' Vocabulary Mastery By Using Animation Video on English Language Teaching. *Indonesian Journal of Research and Educational Review*, 1(3), 354-362. <https://doi.org/10.51574/ijrer.v1i3.391>
- Octavia, N., Astutik, Y. M., & E., R. (2023). Teachers' Teaching Strategies For Teaching Speaking Skills At Junior High School. *Borneo Educational Journal (Borju)*, 5(1), 37–47. <https://doi.org/10.24903/bej.v5i1.1107>

- Preszler, J. Et. Al. (2006). Models of second language acquisition. *Handbook for Arabic Language Teaching Professionals in the 21st Century*, 21–33. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110132649.1.6.515>
- Raharja, S., Nashir, I. M., & Andriani, D. E. (2022). The effect of principals' transformational leadership and organizational culture on teacher performance. *Jurnal Kependidikan Penelitian Inovasi Pembelajaran*, 6(2), 152–162. <https://doi.org/10.21831/jk.v6i2.49456>
- Rizky, R. (2020). “Bits and Pieces” to Improve the Students' Writing Skill: Using Educational Game as an Approach to Teach Descriptive Text. *Elsya: Journal of English Language Studies*, 2(1), 20–25. <https://doi.org/10.31849/elsya.v2i1.3631>
- Rizky, R., & Zainil, Y. (2021). The Use of the Bits and Pieces Game on Students' Achievement on Writing Report Text. *Al-Ishlah: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 13(1), 301–306. <https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v13i1.463>.
- Romrome, A. Y., & Ena, O. T. (2022). Incorporating Local Culture in English Language Teaching for Papuan Junior High School Students. *Journal of English Education and Teaching*, 6(2), 207–221. <https://doi.org/10.33369/jeet.6.2.207-221>
- Sugiyono, S. (2017). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*. Alfabeta.
- Suryani, A., Soedarso, S., Diani, K., & Rosmawati, R. (2020). English Teaching In Social And Cultural Contexts: Language Teachers As Cultural Managers. *LLT Journal: A Journal on Language and Language Teaching*, 23(2), 273–292. <https://doi.org/10.24071/llt.v23i2.2470>
- Yanti, N. D., & Maridi, S. (2019). Analysis of biologi teaching material in senior high school learning biology process in Surakarta. *ICEL: International Conference on Advances in Education, Humanities, and Language*, 23–24. <https://doi.org/10.4108/eai.23-3-2019.2284942>