INTRODUCTING TARGET LANGUAGE CULTURE THROUGH MOVIE WATCHING AND DISCUSSION

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Abstract: Introducing Target Language Culture through Movie Watching and Discussion. The aim of this research was to find out whether or not movie watching and identification of cross cultural aspects could improve the students' comprehension and their activities in Cross Cultural Understanding Class. Besides, the research was also to discover problems faced by both the students and the teacher during the implementation of the technique. It was a classroom based action research conducted in two cycles in the even semester of the academic year 2006/2007. The subjects of the research were the second semester students of English Department Diploma-3. The result showed that (1) students' comprehension in Cross Cultural Understanding Class was fairly good in which all students have passed the course, (2) more than 50% of the overall students were actively involved during the teaching learning activities both in group discussion and class discussion, and (3) the students were somewhat still had some difficulties in understanding native speakers speech. Yet, Cross Cultural Understanding is a content subject matter which requires students to be competent in mastering language skills.

Abstrak: Pengenalan Budaya Bahasa Sasaran melalui Menyimak Film dan Diskusi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bahwa implementasi pembelajaran *Movie Watching* dan identifikasi aspek-aspek lintas budaya dapat meningkatkan pemahaman dan aktivitas mahasiswa dalam pembelajaran *Cross Cultural Understanding*. Di samping itu, penelitian ini juga melihat kendala-kendala yang dihadapi dalam penerapan teknik pembelajaran tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan rancangan penelitian tindakan kelas yang dilaksanakan dalam dua siklus pada semester genap tahun ajaran 2006/2007. Subjek penelitian adalah mahasiswa semester 2 Jurusan Bahasa Inggris Diploma-3. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa: (1) pemahaman mahasiswa dalam mata kuliah *Cross Cultural Understanding* cukup baik, yaitu seluruh mahasiswa mencapai nilai lulus, (2) lebih dari 50% dari seluruh jumlah mahasiswa berpartisipasi aktif dalam perkuliahan baik dalam diskusi kelas maupun kelompok, (3) mahasiswa masih mengalami kesulitan dalam menyimak film yang tokoh-tokohnya merupakan penutur asli bahasa Inggris. Pada dasarnya, *Cross Cultural Understanding* adalah mata kuliah konten yang menuntut mahasiswa sudah memiliki keterampilan berbahasa Inggris yang baik.

Key words: movie watching, cross cultural understanding, target language culture

Why is it important to learn about another culture? For those who have been learning a foreign language is even required to be aware and understand about the culture of the people of the target language. Regarding its importance, cross cultural understanding is therefore mainly included in the curriculum of the English Department of Undiksha and is believed to be included in other studies of foreign languages. When communicating with people from the target language, being aware of the difference of cultural backgrounds is one important aspect which determines the success of cross cultural communication.

Cross culture communication is communication between people from different cultural

background in the meaning of different in race, ethnic, as well as social and economic (Tubbs & Moss, 2001). Many people may not be aware of their own culture until they are faced with those who come from another culture. This is confirmed by O'Sullivan (1994) who illustrates that one may not be aware of culture in their daily life until it becomes 'visible'. As an example, the issue of culture will occur when one work with someone from another culture, teach a class of students from different cultural background or talk to a neighbour from another culture or dealing with foreign clients. While Porter and Samovar (in Mulyana & Rakhmat, 2003: 11) describes that "our mobility is increasing therefore space has merely become a problem". They believe that people have a lot of chance to communicate and having cross cultural relationship in the daily life.

Lin (2006) mentions that language and culture are inseparable. She further mentions that learning a foreign language makes a language learner appreciate one's own language more, as well as cultures from other countries. In learning a foreign language and to be able to communicate in the target language, one needs to be aware of the target language cultural background. It is important for learners to understand and perceive other cultures as well as their own. Hasibuan (1995) states that in order to understand people from other culture, the references on how they value, interpret, and accept things in their own way of life are needed. Being unable to appreciate that people are culturally different may cause misunderstanding which can lead to serious conflicts.

Concerning the close relationship between language and culture, learners of English as a foreign language are required to have adequate knowledge about the culture of the people who speak the language. Nowadays, it is not impossible for Indonesian or Balinese students who study English as a foreign language to meet international people where English is commonly spoken. Levine and Adelman (1982) mention that when interacting with people from different cultures, one's tendency is to judge them according to one's own values, a tendency which often interferes with successful cultural adjustment and intercultural communication. With intercultural understanding, students can learn to identify the ways a culture influences an individual values, assumptions, and beliefs about the world. Moreover, Darling (2001) write that people in Indonesia – Bali are talking a lot about cultural conversation these days. It shows a lot about how differently foreigners and the locals see things.

Based on the experience of the author in teaching Cross Cultural Understanding in the previous even semester, it shows that: (1) the teaching of the subject was conducted mainly through lecturing where the teacher talked and the students had to listen; (2) in some meetings, the students were required to be in groups to present a topic from a text book and the students merely discussed what was mentioned in the book; (3) after the students presented a topic or listening to the lecture, others tended to be passive and reluctant to be involved in the classroom discussion, even, if one would ask a question, that was because the lecturer called his name to; and (4) as far as the author knew, the teaching of Cross-Cultural Understanding has almost never been supported with any media which may improve the process of learning. Thus, the students were not yet motivated to be critical. Concerning these weaknesses, teachers of Cross Cultural Understanding need to find a way to create a better teaching learning process which does not only produce students who are competent in English but also understand the importance of cross cultural communication. In order to overcome the problems and to minimize the weaknesses, it was then required a teaching learning strategy which can enhance students' activity and critical thinking. The strategy used was having students to watch a movie which was combined with clarifying cross cultural aspects found in the movie.

In Cross Cultural Understanding class, in order to be able to perceive other cultures, it is necessary for the students to see how the people

live their lives. Even though, they have not experienced living in another culture, they may see it in movies. Through watching the movies, the students may observe events, examples of cultural aspects, and people's way of life in certain community, how people express and react on particular situation, and relationship between people as well as the language spoken by the people. Harris and Moran (2003) describes there are several cultural aspects which can be identified, clarified and analyzed such as language and communication, space and time, relationship, norms, table manner, believes as well as attitudes. Moreover, from the movie being watched, students are challenged to talk about what had been observed in the movie either with their group as well as with the teacher. Besides, watching movies together with others are fun and enjoyable.

Therefore, this study aims at describing how target language culture can be introduced through movie watching and discussion. The purpose of the study was to find out whether or not movie watching combined with clarification of cultural aspects improved students understanding about cross cultural commu-nication and increased their classroom parti-cipation.

METHOD

The study was conducted in the English Department of Diploma III, Ganesha University of Education. The subjects of the study were the students of Semester 2 which consisted of 28 students who joined cross cultural understanding class. The design of the study was a classroom action research which include planning, action, observation and reflection. Before the action was conducted, the lecturer designed the syllabus of the lesson, selected topics, made handouts, designed research instruments and selected movies which would be watched by the students.

As planning was accomplished, the action was implemented in three steps. First, the students were watching a movie from a DVD. While they were watching the movie, they had to take notes about the cultural aspects which were shown in the movie. The cultural aspects included introduction, verbal communication, nonverbal communication, personal relationship, educational attitudes, family values, time and space patterns, cultural conflict, and cultural adjustment. The length of the movie was 90 minutes exactly the time of a one regular lesson. Second, during the following meeting, the students formed small discussion groups consisting of four students. Within the group, they discussed the cultural aspects they had identified in the movie. Each group then had to make a report about what they had observed in the movie. Third, each group gave a 15 minutes presentation to the class and all students were free to ask questions and to give comments about cultural aspects presented by the speakers.

In the process of data collection, some techniques were used. Each technique was suited with the intended data. They are presented in Table 01.

Table 01. Data Collection Techniques

No	Kinds of Data	Technique	Instrument
1	Students' comprehension	Test and written report	Comprehension test and written report
2	Students' activities	Observation	Observation sheet
3	Obstacles during the process of teaching and learning	Observation	Lecturer's diary and students' questionnaire

Students' comprehension is analyzed based on learning outcomes as well as scoring rubric as they are presented below. In order to be called successful, the class should reach the following learning outcomes: (1) students are considered successful in comprehending the lesson if they pass the course in mark A, B, or C with the As + Bs are more than the Cs; (2) the course is considered successful if more than 70% of the overall students get A and B; and (3) students' activity in teaching and learning activity process is considered good if more than 70% of the overall students attend the course and actively involve in it.

Additionally, the scoring rubric used in this study is taken from *Buku Pedoman Studi Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha tahun 2006*. It is presented in Table 02.

Table 02. Scoring Rubric

Range	Score (in Number)	Score (in Letter)	Category
85% -100%	4	A	Very good
70% - 84%	3	B	Good
55% - 69%	2	C	Average
40% - 54%	1	D	Below average
0% - 39%	0	E	Poor

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Cycle 1

In Cycle 1, the students decided to watch a movie entitled 'Mean Girl.' From the evaluation, it was found that students' comprehension in cross cultural aspects was not satisfying yet. It was shown by the percentage of students' outcomes, in which only 36% of the overall students achieved 'good', other 50% students achieved 'average' and the rest 14% students achieved 'below average'. None of them achieved 'very good'.

On the other hand, from 'Mean Girl', students could already identify some cross cultural aspects, namely: varieties of introduction, non-verbal communication, personal relationship, educational attitude.

In the aspect of varieties of introduction, the students could differentiate ways of self introduction, either formally, informally, or semiformally. They were able to describe examples from each formality. For example: the moment when Cady (the main character) introduced herself to a fellow mate, or when she was introduced by the principal, Mr. Duval, in front of the class to other students.

In the aspect of Non-verbal communication, most of the students could describe aspects of non-verbal communication found in the movie, in which the meaning was delivered in the form of body language. For example, intentional eye contact when the characters were chatting, facial expression, as well as gesture.

In the aspect of Personal relationship, students could identify aspects of personal relationship, either in the form of friendship, or family. For example, when one day, Cady's parents were not home, Cady invited her friends for a party in her house. On that party, more people came than expected and the house became a total chaos. Some of them even broke things belonging to Cady's parents. When the parents found out what Cady was doing, the parent got upset and as a consequence to what Cady was doing, Cady then was grounded. This showed that in a family relationship, when someone breaks the rule, then they have to be ready for the consequence of what they have done.

In the aspect of Educational attitude, since this movie is about high school students in United States of America, most of the students were able to observe aspects of educational attitude found in it. For instance, there was competition in learning process, rewards for students' learning achievement as well as for programs conducted in the school.

Yet, the students failed to observe some other cross cultural aspects that can be found in the movie. They were: family values, time and space patterns, cultural conflict, and cultural adjustment. None of the students could see these aspects in the movie they watched. Meanwhile, if the students were critical enough, they would be able to see these aspects explicitly. For examples: the students would see parents - children relationship in the movie; the strategy of solving problems; and children's freedom to express ideas and opinion. On the aspects of cultural conflict, for instance, the students failed to see that Cady who grew up in South Africa faced problems when she had to come to America in

her adolescence. These difficulties, either shown in making friends as well as schooling. In sum, the students failed to recognize these.

From the observation, it was also found that in Cycle 1, the students' activity was not good yet. It was only the students with great confidence and ability in speaking English involved in the discussion session. Meanwhile, approximately half of the class kept silent and took no part in the discussion. Additionally, there were many students who raised questions on the cross cultural aspects being discussed. Unfortunately, more than 50% of the overall students could not give any opinion or information on the topic. It showed that the class discussion was dominated by the students with good skills in English.

Two obstacles were faced during Cycle 1. They were recorded on the observation sheet, lecturer's diary as well as the students' questionnaire. First, in watching the movie, the students sometimes forgot, or totally forgot to take notes on the cross cultural aspects as well as the expressions used in the film. They were flown by the story. Second, the result of the students' questionnaire showed that 75% of the overall students found difficulties in understanding the conversations in the movie since the characters spoke too fast. They could not understand new words and new idioms used in it. However, as foreign language learners, especially English, the students should accustom themselves to hear English spoken by native speakers.

From the observation, evaluation, and obstacles found in Cycle 1, the researcher decided that it was important to conduct Cycle 2. In Cycle 1, students gave opinion that the film should be played or watched more than once. They argued that the same film should be played at least twice to give chance for them to understand the story, as well as to have more opportunity to observe the intended language and the cross cultural aspects.

Cycle 2

Based on the reflection of Cycle 1, Cycle 2 was designed to solve weaknesses of Cycle 1. In Cycle 2, the researcher decided to give longer time for the students to watch the movie. This was done in order to give more opportunity for them to understand the story as well as longer time to observe the cross cultural aspects in the movie they watched.

Cycle 2 began on May 16th 2007. On the first meeting, the students were allowed to choose movies to be analyzed. It was a principle that the movie should reflect observable cultural aspects. Further it would be compared to the local culture. Students were allowed to watch it in their home. A student could choose a movie which he/she considered interesting. These were done in order to give broader opportunities for them to watch as well as to observe cultural aspects on the movie. On the other hand, students – especially those who felt that the characters in the movie talk too fast – can choose *Bahasa Indonesia* in the subtitle menu, or they can use *review* or *fast forward* menu as often as they want.

On the following meeting, May 23rd 2007, students worked in small groups consisted of 3-4 students per group. They discussed cultural aspects which they found in each movie, and then compared those aspects to Balinese or Eastern culture. Discussion on small groups lasted for 30 minutes. Then, each group presented the result of the discussion and invited questions, information, or ideas from the remaining groups. At the closure of the meeting, the lecturer gave information on the evaluation model that would be conducted on the following week. The evaluation was in the form of written report in which students could choose one of the cultural aspects as the topic of their report. They should compare the intended cultural aspect in their own family, environment, and society, with the same cultural aspects in the movie they watched. The theoretical background/review of their report should be taken from their two text books, Beyond Language: *Intercultural Communication for English as a Second Language* and *Understanding Ways: Communicating Between Cultures.*

Cycle 2 ended on June 6th 2007. On that day, the students submitted their reports. At the same time, they also came up with their obstacles during the teaching and learning process. The evaluation showed that by the use of *Movie Watching* technique in Cycle 2, students' comprehension about cross cultural aspects was good enough, on the meaning that they could pass the course with mark A, B, and C. However, by the end of Cycle 2, the course was still considered to be unsuccessful for less than 70% of the overall students achieved A and B. Only 7% of the 28 students achieved A, and 38% achieved B. Still, the result of this cycle was better compared to Cycle 1. In the end of Cycle 1, there were some

students who achieved score under 55. However, 55 was the minimum score in the end of cycle 2.

Another positive thing that was employed in Cycle 2 was an observation to local culture. Students became aware of their environment, their society, their cultural background as well as their language. They made simple report on their culture and compared it to the culture they observed in the movie. This observation is supported by several arguments related to the benefit of movie watching in cross cultural understanding as mentioned by several experts. Summerfield (2004) states that a movie reflects certain groups of society. By watching a movie, students can identify cross-cultural aspects and increase the knowledge about themselves and other cultures. Besides, movie can raise awareness and enhance cross cultural skills. A movie can give more than just awareness of the different in culture but also a media of improving the language skills. King (2006) believes that a movie provides contextualized linguistic, para-linguistic and giving authentic information about cross culture as well as comprehending and practicing the target language. While in an article entitled 'Teaching and Learning English as a Second Language (ESL)' found at http://www.boycongroup.com/education/ed_ESL.htm (2006), it mentioned that a movie not only providing the audience with the language but also cultural information.

Additionally, students opened themselves more on the discussion conducted in the course. They gave more opinions as well as questions on either the cultural aspects or the controversy in the society. There were more than 50% of the overall students involved in the group and class discussion actively. The presentation was also done by the students who previously not active in the class discussion. These students were motivated by the other active students.

Based on the researcher's observation as well as the students' questionnaire, teaching and learning process by the use of *Movie Watching* strategy have some obstacles. Even though, the obstacles in Cycle 1 had been solved and handled in Cycle 2, generally, the students were still facing difficulties in listening to the conversations spoken by the characters in the film. They were not accustomed to listen to daily conversation spoken by native speakers. In other words, they were not well trained to hear words and idioms which are uttered by native speakers of English. This caused lack understanding on the part of the students on what was presented by the movie. In addition to this, *Cross Cultural Understanding* is a content subject, not a language skill subject. Content subject requires students to have good skills in English. This subject was offered in the second semester of English Diploma-3 program, when the students were still on the process of learning language skills, i.e.: listening, speaking, reading and writing. In fact, students faced difficulties in taking *Cross Cultural Understanding* course which requires good skills in English as well as broad knowledge about the world.

CONCLUSION

At the beginning of the course, the students' comprehension on cultural diversity was low. Regarding to this phenomena, the researcher proposed *Movie Watching* strategy clarified with cross cultural aspects to be applied in *Cross Cultural Understanding* course to improve the students' comprehension in this course. The technique was conducted in two cycles, and the result is presented as follows. First, the students' achievement in *Cross Cultural Understanding* is good enough on the meaning that all the students passed the course. There were 7% of the overall students achieved A, 36% of them achieved B, and the remaining 57% achieved C. Second, the course was considered to be less successful since less than 70% of the overall students achieved As and Bs. Third, more than 50% of the overall students actively involved in class and group discussion by asking questions as well as giving comments. Fourth, the main obstacle during this study is the students had difficulty to listen to English conversation spoken by native speakers.

Cross Cultural Understanding is a content subject with English as the medium of instruction. It requires good English skills on the part of the students. So, it probably was better to offer the subject in a higher semester. Two suggestions are offered for better improvement in the future. They are: (1) *Movie Watching* technique can be used in *Cross Cultural Understanding* course, but it requires good skills of English on the part of the students, and (2) in watching the movie, the subtitle should be in *Bahasa Indonesia* so the students with lack skill in listening can understand it by reading the subtitle.

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