

## **EFL STUDENTS' VIEWS AND EXPERIENCES OF CULTURE LEARNING: ARE THEY WORTHY TO FOSTER INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE?**

**Marwa**

([marwaoke81@yahoo.com](mailto:marwaoke81@yahoo.com))

Universitas Lancang Kuning, Pekanbaru, Indonesia

**Abstract:** In the light of globalization, intercultural competence is crucially demanded by the language learners to be successful speakers and mediators in international interaction and communication. This study aims at investigating how the Indonesian EFL students view and undertake the culture learning in their classrooms. This study was a survey research carried out in October and December 2016 in two state universities: 1) University of Riau (UR) located in Riau Province and 2) Brawijaya University (UB) in Malang-East Java. There were a total of 80 participants involved by using random sampling. The student questionnaire (adopted and adapted from HST. Kiet, 2011) consisting of six statements was used. To answer the research question, descriptive statistics analysis (Sum of score, Mean and Standard Deviation) was used to analyse the completed student questionnaire. The findings reveal that the students showed positive attitudes in culture learning purposes; they mainly learned cultural facts oriented to target culture exploration as the dominant cultural learning in the classroom; they used media such as internet, TV and literature as the most dominant cultural learning sources outside the classroom; they found that culture learning benefited them to their EFL learning; and finally they agreed that the target culture should be taught together with the target language in EFL classes. Therefore, it is suggested that future researchers do such an in-depth study pertaining to students' ICC learning and development in the environment of classroom interactions.

**Keywords:** *intercultural competence, culture learning, EFL classrooms, students' views*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The competence of teachers and their activities cannot be passed over while talking about the students' readiness for active participation in today's globalized world. Most importantly, facilitating and equipping English students or English teacher candidates with essential intercultural competence (ICC hereafter) during the period of university study is a precondition to cope with the rapid changing of today's world. In addition, the realities and opportunities of building the ICC of particularly Indonesian English teachers are crucially demanded now referring to Indonesian National Qualifying Framework (INQF) with its

ultimate goal-ASEAN community 2015. In fact, the only possible working language that will facilitate and connect such regional scope community is English treated as a global or international language or even as a lingua franca. This context of language use automatically challenges the readiness of the speakers to be globally and culturally competent. Therefore, English teachers, teacher candidates, and students have to acquire skills and competences necessary for satisfactory functioning in intercultural and multicultural society.

In ESL/EFL settings, the intercultural contents as a crucial element in ICC development are typically embedded in an academic subject such as foreign languages or social studies. However, the degree to which subjects such as foreign languages and social studies are intercultural depends on the curriculum orientation (Davies and Read, 2005). It is recognized that language is not neutral and foreign language teaching can involve exposing students to a variety of texts and representations of a culture in order to develop students' critical understanding of the cultural aspects of language and cultural representations (Byram & Feng 2004; Ware & Kramsch, 2005). However, theorists argue that experiential learning about culture is more effective than learning that is confined within a classroom (Byram & Feng, 2004).

Current studies show many pathways of how ESL/EFL students have been experienced with ICC learning development. One of the foremost activities is pertinent to how experiential learning through ICT use enables students to develop ICC. Today's web-based technologies have altered such slow motion of past international interaction that would have generally required long trips. Now, ICT is being used by foreign language teachers as a tool to facilitate teaching and learning. As a matter of fact, interaction between learners and native speakers of a language or 'tandem learning' is often used to enhance both language learning and cultural understanding (Byram & Feng, 2004). The internet, email, blogs, online learning, E-learning, chat rooms, instant messaging, and tandem learning can be used to explore cultural representations and enable students to develop intercultural awareness, intercultural competence, and language skills and reflect on its relevance to their experiences (Ho, 2000; Elola & Oskoz, 2008; Baker, 2012; Son & Park, 2012; Dervin, 2014).

There have been various ICT tools used by the language learners particularly in relation to fostering their language skills incorporated with ICC in the classroom. Ho (2000) presents the development of intercultural awareness and writing skills through e-mail exchange between primary level students (Singapore and Birmingham, UK) that develops students' confidence, language skills and creativity, sense of awareness of intercultural concerns, and of their being part of a dynamic, international, global community. Baker (2012) asserts that E-learning offers many new pedagogic opportunities and develops an online course in ICC for a group of English language learners. The study reveals positive responses to both the course contents

and the course delivery through e-learning and students had very favorable attitudes and responses to learning about ICC and global Englishes. Elola & Oskoz (2008) investigate how blogs are used to connect language learners in Spain and the US for the purpose of developing students' ICC and language skills. Devrin's (2014) uses discursive pragmatics (DP) to examine how the students in two European countries construct interculturality online during several chat sessions. The study shows that the students can negotiate and defend their national and ethnic identities and also construct each other's perceptions on written discourses. The further ICC research has extended its concern on the ICT tools usability. Son and Park (2012) examine intercultural usability of language learning websites due to its lack of intercultural focus and presentation of static information on the TL. They explore intercultural aspects of language learning websites and present usability guidelines for designing cultural dimensions of language learning to be integrated in intercultural language learning websites.

However, the challenges and implications of the ICT use in facilitating the ICC learning also need to be taken into account. Ho (2000) claims e-mail exchange project also yielded discernible shifts in teachers' traditional roles and responsibilities, and the part they played in their students' participation as the project developed. Notable differences were also observed in students' expectation of teachers in the two countries. Baker (2012) claims that for ELT to be of most relevance to users of English; it needs to incorporate knowledge of global English and intercultural communication education and e-learning course offers one example of how this can be delivered. Devrin (2014) proposes questions pertaining to the development of intercultural competence facilitated in such a context of online interaction as the students are sitting in a safe environment, writing to each other. He also questions the idea of electronic encounters possibility to become the first step to 'real' intercultural encounters. Also, Son & Park (2012) assert that there is a need to answer the question of how language learning websites integrate the target language and culture for the development of intercultural sensitivity and competence.

Another pathway which possibly promotes students' ICC development is through experiential learning via study abroad. How can teachers provide EFL students with meaningful and authentic intercultural experiences that also integrate language and content? Some educators, in response to this question, have adopted a communicative approach (Liaw, 2007) in which students use English to acquire knowledge of content and culture, thereby enhancing their understanding of the unfamiliarity. Experiential learning activities to engage students in an authentic dialogue of cultures (Su, 2008) can be done through visit abroad either for the sake of continuing the study or joining the international student-exchange program. In fact, many studies show the effect of visits abroad on intercultural competence development (Medina-Lopez-Portillo 2004; William, 2005; Gu & Schweisfurth, 2006; Heuser, 2012; Trede, Bowles & Bridges, 2013; Jackson, 2015).

Study abroad enhances students' intercultural understanding which leads to their ICC development. Medina- Lopez-Portillo's (2004) study of US students abroad suggests that the longer students are immersed within a culture, the more they learn and the more their intercultural sensitivity develops. Short study abroad programs may also result in increased intercultural sensitivity. However, Williams (2005) found that overseas study can develop intercultural capabilities only if students actually interact with the locals. Thus, it is not enough to simply study or work overseas; cultural immersion is important. Heuser's (2012) study among Japanese and American university students using ethnographic conversations in a ten-month study abroad program in the USA can be used as a viable educational method for promoting language, content, and intercultural learning among EFL students.

In fact, international experiences which in turn foster ICC can positively gear to learners' personal and professional growths. Jackson's (2015) study reveals the impact of a semester-long international exchange program on the global-readiness of Chinese university students. Whereas the experimental group experienced gains in intercultural competence, second language self-efficacy, and global-mindedness, the control group (students on the home campus prior to study abroad) regressed slightly. Trede, Bowles & Bridges (2013) suggest that intercultural competence and global citizenship can be developed through international experiences according to the students' academic perceptions. Gu & Schweisfurth (2006) have shed light on the issue of the motivation and adaptations of Chinese learners in two markedly different contexts: China and the UK. The outcome of the intercultural learning process is as much about learners' relationships with their learning environments and teachers and intercultural encounters are potentially positive experiences in that they provide an opportunity for critical self-reflection and self-awareness, strategic adaptation and consequently professional and personal growth.

Regarding the current progress ICC research involving English students particularly in EFL/ESL contexts, it can be argued that ELT classroom is considered as an appropriate context to foster ICC teaching and learning. Consequently, first of all English teachers are demanded to become intercultural competent teachers who can serve ICC teaching to their students well. Su (2014) asserts that EFL teachers should provide tasks to help students develop awareness that English is an international language owned by all who use it and design EFL curriculum with an international and multicultural focus and not merely uncritically focus on promoting Anglo-American and British norms, values, and life experiences by excluding others. Baker (2011) suggests that the ELT classroom is a site in which learners, and ideally teachers, are necessarily engaged in multilingual and multicultural practices and thus provides the ideal environment in which to develop ICC and to prepare users of English to communicate in global settings.

Based on the aforementioned current issues of ESL/EFL students' ICC learning and development, it signals further investigation focused on the students' views and experiences of culture learning. This study is conducted in order to know the Indonesian students' perceptions on the culture learning particularly in their EFL classrooms. Therefore, this study proposes a research question "how do the students view and undertake their culture learning in Indonesian EFL higher education institutions?" In specific, there are some aspects explored covering students' purposes of learning language incorporated with culture, the useful activities of their experience of culture learning in the EFL classroom, their experience of culture learning outside the classroom, their perceptions of the value of aspects of culture learning in English subjects, students' evaluation of the benefits of culture learning in the EFL context, and their opinion about teaching of language and culture in the Indonesian EFL classes.

## **METHOD**

### **Research Design**

This study was a survey research (Creswell, 2005) which collected data first-hand by asking the students some questions in order to gather information specifically in terms of their views and experiences of culture learning in their EFL classrooms. The survey research type employed in this study was questionnaire type which comprised multiple choice items in accordance with the given questionnaire statements. The questionnaire was distributed through group administered questionnaire in this case was English students in the EFL classrooms.

### **Research Setting and Participants**

This study was carried out in October and December 2016 in two state universities: 1) University of Riau (UR) located in Riau Province and 2) Brawijaya University (UB) in Malang-East Java. Regarding the English students' involvement in this research, I took a total of 80 participants (the fifth semester students) consisting 40 students from English Education Department UR and 40 students from English Language Studies UB by using random sampling (Creswell, 2005). The reason for involving the English students as the participants was due to their culture learning experiences in EFL classrooms. Moreover, considering the culture background of students-participants from the two universities, as a matter of fact, they shared a quite similar heterogeneous ethnicity in their EFL classrooms. Naturally, such heterogeneous ethnicity environment could positively and potentially engage the students to

learn about “self” and “otherness”. UR has students from Riau, Jakarta, North Sumatra, West Sumatra, Jambi, Aceh and Palembang. Similarly, UB has students from several different provinces; Jakarta, Bandung, Kalimantan, Riau, Aceh, North Sumatra, Palembang, Sulawesi, Bali and West Sumatra. Since the two universities are public universities; the campuses have commonly become the first choice and favourable places to study for a majority of students who come from several different provinces in Indonesia. Every year, many students take the opportunity on the national scale admission to the public universities in Indonesia across different provinces. Therefore, both UR and UB have such heterogeneous students from different regions in Indonesia.

### **Data Collection Technique and Analysis**

The student questionnaire (adopted and adapted from HST. Kiet, 2011; See Appendix 1) consisting of six items was used. The data collected from the questionnaire related to the students’ views and experiences of culture and language teaching and learning in their EFL contexts. The questionnaire gathered the information in terms of the students’ purposes of learning language incorporated with culture, the useful activities of their experience of culture learning in the EFL classroom, their experience of culture learning outside the classroom, their perceptions of the value of aspects of culture learning in English subjects, their evaluation of the benefits of culture learning, and their opinion of ‘the target culture should be taught together with the target language in the EFL classes in Indonesia’.

Pertaining to the data analysis of the student questionnaire in order to answer the research question, the statistical data analysis was used. The completed student questionnaire was analysed by using statistical computation due to the constructed items used the Likert scale with a scoring range (See Appendix 1). Thus, the descriptive statistics analysis (Sum of score, Mean and Standard Deviation) was used to analyse the completed student questionnaire (Creswell, 2005).

## **FINDINGS**

### **How do the English Students View and Undertake the Culture Learning in Indonesian EFL Classrooms in Higher Education Institutions?**

In terms of the students’ views of culture learning, there were some highlighted aspects covering purposes of learning language incorporated with culture, the useful activities of their experience of culture learning in the EFL classroom, their experience of culture learning

outside the classroom, their perceptions of the value of aspects of culture learning in English subjects, students' evaluation of the benefits of culture learning in the EFL context, and their opinions about teaching of language and culture in the Indonesian EFL classes.

**Table 1: Students' Purpose for Culture Learning**

IC component	N	M	SD
Showing respect for otherness, empathy and tolerance towards other peoples and cultures	80	3.73	1.15
Acquiring knowledge about the target culture	80	3.40	1.18
Developing communicative awareness of rules appropriate for IC	80	3.29	1.20
Developing the ability to interpret events of the target culture and relate them to one's own culture	80	3.15	1.03
Developing cultural awareness of one's own and the target culture	80	3.10	.95
Acknowledging the value of the identities of others	80	2.88	1.08
Adapting one's behaviour to different requirements and situations	80	2.33	1.29

Note: M and SD are calculated on a five-point scale (1-5)

Table 1 shows data that indicates students' purposes for culture learning. It shows that *showing respect for otherness, empathy and tolerance towards other peoples and cultures* (M=3.73), *acquiring knowledge about the target culture* (M=3.40) and *developing communicative awareness of rules appropriate for intercultural communication* (M=3.29) were the students' three top for purposes of culture learning. The purpose for culture learning *showing respect for otherness, empathy and tolerance towards other peoples and cultures* was also considered important (M=3.73) and *adapting one's behaviour to different requirements and situations* was considered quite important (2.33). The results indicate that the ICC aspect of showing respect for otherness, empathy and tolerance towards other peoples and cultures was considered as the most prominent purpose that represented any other ICC purposes.

Regarding students' culture learning activities in the classroom, there were some activities highlighted as can be seen in the following table 2.

**Table 2: Students' Culture Learning Activities in the Classroom**

Culture learning activities	Sum of scores	M	SD
Discussing cultural similarities and differences	306	3.83	1.11
Sharing experiences about the target culture	288	3.60	1.06
Watching videos about the target culture	278	3.48	1.36
Exploring values and beliefs of the target culture	261	3.26	.99
Learning cultural facts from reading texts	238	2.98	1.19
Doing exercises about cultural facts	222	2.78	1.16
Answering teacher's questions about cultural facts	205	2.56	1.16
Solving cultural dilemmas	195	2.44	1.32

Notes: Sum of scores based on 80 students; M, SD calculated on five-point scale (1-5)

Table 2 reports on data that portrays students' culture learning activities in the classroom. The students were asked to determine the five scales (from the *least useful* up to *most useful*) to any activities they often learned in the classroom. The mean scores are used to interpret the usefulness of each activity. The results show that the activities related to *discussing cultural similarities and differences* (M=3.83), *sharing experience about the target culture* (M=3.60), *watching video about the target culture* (3.48), and *exploring values and beliefs of the target cultures* (3.26) were the students' four top of culture learning activities in the classroom. However, the rest other culture learning activities in the classroom accordingly show almost the same mean scores with the range (2.98 -2.44) and the standard deviation range (1.32-1.16). In fact, *discussing cultural similarities and differences* was considered "useful" (M=3.83) and *solving cultural dilemmas* was the first least popular and was considered "quite useful" (M=2.44). The results indicate that the aspect of cultural facts oriented to target culture exploration was the most dominant cultural learning activities in the classroom.

Table 3 reports on data of students' culture learning activities outside the classroom. The students were asked to choose among the five scales (from *least useful* up to *most useful*) to any activities they learned culture outside the classroom. The mean scores are used to interpret the usefulness of each activity. The results show that the activities related to *searching for cultural information on the internet* (M=3.74, SD=1.09), *watching English TV channels* (M=3.45, SD=1.51), *reading English literature* (3.26, SD=1.39) were the students' three top of culture learning activities outside the classroom. In fact, *searching cultural information on the internet* was also considered "useful" (M=3.83) and *meeting NES visiting your school* was the first least popular and was considered in the scale "quite useful" (M=2.33 with SD=1.59).



**Table 3: Students' Culture Learning Activities outside the Classroom**

Culture learning activities	Sum of scores	M	SD
Searching for cultural information on the Internet	299	3.74	1.09
Watching English TV channels	276	3.45	1.51
Reading English literature	261	3.26	1.35
Reading English newspapers/magazines	212	2.65	1.52
Communicating with native English speaker (NES) in public	204	2.55	1.57
Meeting NES visiting your school	186	2.33	1.59

Notes: Sum of scores based on 80 students; M, SD calculated on five-point scale (1-5)

Table 3 displays that the media was the main source for the students' culture learning outside the classroom. As a matter of fact, the students mainly learned about the target language culture through the media due to the lack of contact with NES; however, they still considered such contact very useful for them. The results indicate that accessing cultural facts oriented to available media (internet, TV and literature) was the most dominant cultural learning outside the classroom.

The aspect of students' perception of the value of aspects of culture learning was highlighted in the five scales (from strongly disagree up to strongly agree). The results can be seen in table 4

**Table 4: Students' Perception of the Value of Aspects of Culture Learning**

Perceptions	N	M	SD
Learning about culture helps me become more tolerant and open-minded towards other peoples and cultures	80	4.36	.82
learning about culture is as important as learning about language in an english class.	80	4.11	.83
I need to understand my own culture first before learning about other cultures.	80	4.06	.93
I need to learn about the language first before learning abouts the target culture.	80	3.70	1.07
My own culturally-shaped knowledge does not influence much the way I interact with people from other cultural	80	3.70	1.15
I can acquire both additional cultural knowledge and intercultural skills in the classroom.	80	3.33.	.90
Misunderstanding in intercultural communication is mostly due to language problems rather than cultural differences.	80	3.14	1.03

Notes: The mean scores on these sentences are calculated in a reverse manner to be comparable with other mean scores; M and SD are calculated on a five-point scale (1-5)

Table 4 reports on data that reflects students' perceptions of the value of aspects of culture learning. It points out that the students agreed that *learning about culture help me become more tolerant and open-minded toward other people and culture* was "important" (M=4.36) as well as *learning about culture is as important as learning about language in an English class* (M=4.11), and *I need to understand my own culture first before learning about other cultures* (M=4.06). The first least perception was *misunderstanding in intercultural communication is mostly due to the language problems rather than cultural differences* (M=3.14). The results show that the students had positive perceptions of learning cultures since they could be more tolerant and open-minded. They had awareness that language and culture learning were important and they also had good appreciation to their own culture.

With regard to the students' views of the benefits of cultural learning in their EFL classrooms; the three scales ("very much", "to a certain extent" and "not at all") were given to the statement. It can be seen in the following table 5.

**Table 5: Students' Evaluation of the Benefits of Culture Learning**

N	Very much	To a certain	Not at All	M	SD
80	35	39	6	2.36	.62
Note : M and SD are calculated on a three-point scale (1-3)					

Table 5 displays data of the students' evaluation of the benefits of culture learning (M=2.36 with SD=.62). The results show such high mean score 2.36 (from the highest M=3.00) with a low SD .62 indicates the homogeneity of the students' views of the culture learning benefits. The result reveals that the students agreed that culture learning benefited them to their EFL learning.

Moreover, in terms of the students' agreement with the statement "the target culture should be taught together with the target language in EFL classes in Indonesia", the three scales ("yes", "with limitation" and "no") were given as the options. It can be seen in table 6.

**Table 6: Students' Opinion about Teaching of Language and Culture in the EFL Context**

N	Yes	With Limitation	No	M	SD
80	46	27	7	2.49	.66
Note : M and SD are calculated on a three-point scale (1-3)					

Table 6 displays data of the students' opinion about teaching of language and culture in the EFL context (M=2.49 with SD=.66). The results show such high mean score 2.49 with a low SD .66 which indicates the homogeneity of the students' opinion about teaching of language

and culture in the EFL context. The result shows that most students agreed the target culture should be taught together with the target language in their EFL classes.

In brief, the students show their positive views and supportive experiences of both language and culture learning in their EFL classroom. Students' goals for culture learning indicate that the ICC aspect of showing respect for otherness, empathy and tolerance towards other peoples and cultures was identified as the leading purpose that represented other ICC purposes. They showed their positive attitudes in culture learning purposes. They mainly learned cultural facts oriented to target culture exploration as the dominant culture learning in the classroom. The media (internet, TV and literature) was the most dominant culture learning sources outside the classroom. The students had positive perceptions of learning cultures. The students found that culture learning benefited them to their EFL learning. Finally, they agreed that the target culture should be taught together with the target language in their EFL classes.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Students' Views and Experiences of Culture Learning in Indonesian EFL Classrooms in Higher Education Institutions**

In terms of the students' views and experiences of culture learning, the findings show that the students' purposes for cultural learning indicate that the ICC aspect of showing respect for otherness, empathy and tolerance towards other peoples and cultures was identified as the leading purpose that represented any other ICC purposes. As a matter of fact, this view constitutes the core attributes of ICC. This finding is in line with Byram et al. (2002) who assert that the ICC dimensions in language teaching aims to develop learners as intercultural speakers or mediators who are able to engage with complexity and multiple identities in intercultural communication which is held on the basis of respect for individuals and equality of human rights as the democratic basis for social interaction and to avoid the stereotyping which accompanies perceiving someone through a single identity.

Regarding the students' culture learning activities which are often oriented to the target culture exploration, it can be confirmed to what Ali & Walker's (2014) investigation on TESOL materials design the target language's (TL) culture cannot be completely ignored but that both TL's culture and the second/foreign language learners' home culture should ideally be included so that the learners' ICC can be developed. It has been a nature of EFL classrooms that they are often associated with such explorations of the cultural facts oriented to target culture since the students are learning the language. However, in its real practice, such culture learning activities which in turn embed some other cultural facts' explorations of the students'

home culture as Baker (2011) claims that exploring traditional media and art through English including film, television, radio, newspapers, novels, and magazines can be used in culture teaching and learning for the sake of critically exploring and evaluating the images of local and other cultures.

The findings also revealed that media (internet, TV and literature) was the most dominant cultural learning sources outside the classroom. In case of EFL learning context, the students have little or no contacts to English native speakers. Such alternative culture learning sources like accessing media was considered useful, supportive and effective to facilitate the students in learning culture and language. It is in line with Godwin-Jones's (2013) argument that textbooks oversimplify and distil complexity into simple patterns and easy to understand paradigms, however many available opportunities could provide alternatives to students with the coming of today's ICT. In fact, many teachers have recognized that to have students work with culturally and linguistically authentic speech, using the internet for example to connect their students with groups of willing native speakers offers the best opportunity to move beyond the textbook. In fact, there have been many inquiries on the integrating and use of media range from the traditional to the most advanced such as ICT media in the area of language and culture teaching and development (Ho, 2000; Elola & Oskoz, 2008; Hamilton & Woodward-Kron, 2010; Son & Park, 2012; Baker, 2012; Freiermuth & Huang, 2012; Yang & Fleming, 2013; J. Wang et al., 2013; Dervin, 2014; Pandey, & Ardichvili, 2015).

The findings indicate that the English students evidently had positive perceptions of learning cultures since they believe it help them become more tolerant and open-minded, have equal positive values of language and culture learning and have good appreciation to their own culture. Such students' positive perception as the benefit of learning culture is confirmed in Byram's Model of ICC (1997), explaining that foreign language teachers are asked to guide students through the process of acquiring competencies in attitudes, knowledge, and skills related to ICC while using a foreign language. Teachers must lead students through activities in which ICC dimensions are considered, and ideally transform the students. Consequently, when language skills and intercultural competency are linked in a language classroom, students become optimally prepared for participation in a global world communication and interaction. In relation to this study, the students' positive attitude reflects their teachers' positive values in culture teaching. This is confirmed in Anderson's (1993) claim that students' perceptions of languages and the learning process are culturally derived and may differ drastically from those of their foreign language teachers. As a matter of fact, the Indonesian EFL students were identified to possess such positive views on their culture learning mirror to what have been exposed by their English teachers in the ELT classrooms.

The study shows that the students found that culture learning benefited them to their EFL learning. It is in line with students' views as they agreed the target culture should be taught together with the target language in their EFL classes. This finding relates to Wright (1996) that claims a central concern in ELT; therefore, should raise awareness of the importance of culture in language education. Although it is often thought that culture and language can be taught separately; it is inevitably that culture is present in the language classroom despite any attempts to remove it (Byram, 1997; Kramsch, 1993). In sum, bringing students to see and grasp the positive ideas of the juxtaposition of culture learning and language learning are both crucial for effective communication and language learning now and in the future.

## CONCLUSIONS

The Indonesian EFL students' perceptions of culture learning showed the positive views and experiences in many aspects. The students showed their positive attitude to the culture learning purposes. They mainly learned cultural facts oriented to target culture exploration as the dominant cultural learning activities in the classroom. The media (internet, TV and literature) was the most dominant cultural learning sources outside the classroom. The students found that culture learning benefited them to their EFL learning. Finally, they agreed that the target culture should be taught together with the target language in their EFL classes. In fact, such revealed phenomena were partly and/or largely due to the English teachers' investments as the role models in their EFL classrooms. It can be discerned that there have been such positive reflections and/or implications of what had been exposed by their English teachers in EFL classrooms which trigger the students to develop their ICC through inside and outside classroom activities. Presumably, such supportive and conducive interactions between teachers and students and between students and students have gradually accomplished intercultural awareness and understanding. Therefore, it is suggested to the future researchers to investigate such an in-depth study pertaining to students' ICC learning and development in the environment of classroom interactions. It is important to see how classroom interactions could be an ideal site to foster students' ICC.

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## APPENDIX 1 Student Questionnaire

- How important are the following purposes for your culture learning?  
Please circle the level of importance for each statement below:  
**Least important 1 2 3 4 5 Most important**
  - ✓ Acquiring knowledge about the target culture
  - ✓ Developing the ability to interpret events of the target culture and relate them to one's own culture
  - ✓ Developing cultural awareness of one's own and the target culture
  - ✓ Acknowledging the value of the identities of others
  - ✓ Showing respect for otherness, empathy and tolerance towards other peoples and cultures
  - ✓ Developing communicative awareness of rules appropriate for intercultural communication
  - ✓ Adapting one's behaviour to different requirements and situations
- What is your experience of culture learning in the classroom?  
Please tick any activities you often DO in the classroom.  
**Least useful 1 2 3 4 5 Most useful**
  - ✓ Watching videos about the target culture

- ✓ Learning cultural facts from reading texts
- ✓ Answering teacher's questions about cultural facts
- ✓ Doing exercises about cultural facts
- ✓ Discussing cultural similarities and differences between your culture and the target culture
- ✓ Exploring values and beliefs of the target culture
- ✓ Solving cultural dilemmas
- ✓ Sharing experience about the target culture

3. What is your experience of culture learning outside the classroom?

Please tick any activities you often DO outside the classroom. How useful are they for your culture learning?

**Least useful 1 2 3 4 5 Most useful**

- ✓ Watching English TV channels
- ✓ Reading English newspapers/magazines
- ✓ Reading English literature
- ✓ Searching for cultural information on the Internet
- ✓ Communicating with native English speakers (NES) in public
- ✓ Exchanging emails with NES
- ✓ Meeting NES visiting your school
- ✓ Participating in cultural exchange activities with NES

4. What are your perceptions of the value of aspects of culture learning in your English lessons?

Please give your opinion for each statement below:

**Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree**

- ✓ Learning about culture is as important as learning about language in an English class.
- ✓ I need to learn about the language first before learning about the target culture.
- ✓ I need to understand my own culture first before learning about other cultures.
- ✓ My own culturally-shaped knowledge does not influence much the way I interact with people from other cultural backgrounds.
- ✓ Learning about culture helps me become more tolerant and open-minded towards other peoples and cultures.
- ✓ I need to abandon my own cultural identity while acquiring English.
- ✓ I can acquire both additional cultural knowledge and intercultural skills in the classroom.
- ✓ Misunderstanding in intercultural communication is mostly due to language problems rather than cultural differences.



5. To what extent does culture learning help you with your EFL learning?

Please tick ONE option and give reasons.

**Very much      To a certain extent      Not at all**

Your

reasons:

.....

6. To what extent do you agree with the statement: ‘The target culture should be taught together with the target language in EFL classes in Indonesia’?

Please tick ONE option and give reasons.

**Yes      With limitations      No**

Your

reasons:

.....

*(Adopted and adapted from HST. Kiet, 2011)*