The 4th International Conference
Fakultas Sastra
University of Muhammadiyah Purwokerto

Proceeding
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON TEACHING ENGLISH
AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

“Easly Circling the Western Square:
The Quest for a Best Sinergy of English in
Local Cultures”
Perpustakaan Nasional: Katalog Dalam Terbitan (KDT)
Proceeding International Conference of Teaching English as a Foreign Language

vi + 220 hal; 2159 mm x 1700 mm

Editor : Rina Agustina, S.S., MAplLing. TESOL
Selection Team :
  Prof. Dr. Bambang Yudhi Cahyono (UM Malang)
  Prof. Dr. Jufrizal (UNP Padang)
  Rina Agustina, S.S., MAplLing. TESOL
  Asst. Prof. Amporn Sangiam-wibool

Language Editor : Rina Agustina, S.S., MAplLing. TESOL
First Impression : May, 2012

Published by

Faculty of Letters
University of Muhammadiyah Purwokerto
Jl. Raya Dukuhwaluh, Kembaran, Purwokerto, Indonesia
Phone : 62-281-636751 ext 137
Fax : 62-281-637239
Website : www.cotefl.ump.ac.id
e-mail : cotefl.sastra.ump@gmail.com
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Agustina, Rina (Ed.)
Easternly Circling the Western Square: A Quest for the Best Synergy between English and Local Cultures: Proceeding of the 4th International Conference on Teaching English as Foreign Language (COTEFL) — By: Rina Agustina (Ed.)—Purwokerto, Central Java: Faculty of Letters, University of Muhammadiyah Purwokerto, 2012


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Cover Design : Mr. Majid
Layout : Iqbal & Hary

Printed and Published by
Faculty of Letters
University of Muhammadiyah Purwokerto
Jl. Raya Dukuhwaluh, Kembaran, Purwokerto, Indonesia
Phone : 62-281-636751 ext 137
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e-mail : cotefl.sastra.ump@gmail.com

Printed in the Republic of Indonesia
PREFACE

"Eastly Circling the Western Square: A Quest for the Best Synergy between English and Local Cultures" is the theme selected for the 4th International Conference on Teaching English as a Foreign Language (COTEFL 4), held at Muhammadiyah University of Purwokerto, Central Java Indonesia in May 5th – 6th, 2012. The COTEFL 4 aims at underlining how important culture is and blending local culture into English teaching.

English Language Teaching (ELT) in Indonesia has been focusing on grammar and vocabulary teaching for many years. Since Indonesian Educational Department released and introduced the 2004 National Curriculum, skills-focused teaching, which highlights the four major skills of English to be taught in the classroom, has been the core of ELT in Indonesia until today. Nevertheless, there is one aspect is neglected in teaching English as a Foreign Language, i.e., culture. Culture of English teaching is illustrated as teaching the culture of people from English speaking countries and putting aside the importance of local contexts. This consideration is not ultimately incorrect as differences and similarities between the culture of Englishes and local cultures should be made clear in order to gain success in teaching. Thus, it is important for English teachers to address English teaching not only from Englishes’ perspectives but also within the local cultures, which are familiar to learners.

The description of ELT in Indonesia illustrated previously has encouraged this conference to address cultures and various subjects in the field. The COTEFL 4 proceeding compiles the paper presented in the conference, which covers various issues, namely: (1) Skill-focused on English Language Teaching, (2) Media in English Language Teaching, (3) Assessment in English Language Teaching, (4) Culture and English Language Teaching, (4) Bilingualism and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and (5) Literature, Translation, and English Language Teaching.

Upon the completion of the proceeding, I am extremely grateful to the Dean of the Faculty of Letters of Muhammadiyah University of Purwokerto, the chairperson of the organizing committee, all members of the organizing committee, all presenters of the COTEFL 4, and all participants of COTEFL 4, who have contributed to the success of this conference. Last but not least, this proceeding hopefully gives advantages to the readers, particularly, English language lecturers, English language teachers, educators, English language tutors and instructors, and those who are interested in broadening their knowledge and deepening their understanding on ELT and cultures.

Language Editor,

Rina Agustina, S.S., MApplLING. TESOL
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PLENARY SESSION
PAPERS
acquisition-like learning in which the learning interaction occurs in very spontaneous and natural setting.

Key words: linguistic relativity, Indonesian indigenous local language lexicons

CULTURAL CONTENT IN READING TESTS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN SCORES OF A CLOZE TEST WITH LOCAL CULTURAL CONTENT AND THAT OF FOREIGN CULTURAL CONTENT.

MUCHLAS SUSENO

English Language Study Program, Department of English and Literature
Faculty of Language and Art, State University of Jakarta.
2nd floor, O building Campus UNJ Rawamangun

ABSTRACT

The research was conducted to compare scores of achievement in reading for those who were tested using a modified cloze test, in which foreign cultural content was modified into local cultural contexts, and those who were given non-modified test. For this purpose researcher set up two classes, one being the treatment group and the other control group. In the beginning both groups received the same treatment in the sense that they were taught using modified and non-modified reading texts. They were also familiarized with the same forms of cloze test. It was only the technique of testing that was different.

This experimental research was conducted in SMA AL AZHAR Jakarta, involving 60 students for each group. They were chosen randomly from five classes in that school. Data was collected using two kinds of cloze test, one was modified form and the other was original. The research instrument was considered reliable after being tried out ($r_{tt} A = 0.48$ and $r_{tt} B = 0.42$). Data was analyzed using t-test, with $a = 0.05$ and $df = 118$ obtaining ($t = 2.62 > t_{tab} = 1.66$).

The research finding concludes that students doing modified cloze tests get higher scores of achievement that those doing original cloze test. Therefore, teachers when developing materials of instruction are recommended to adapt reading text material so that foreign cultural content might be contextualized into local content. By so doing reading tests could be developed appropriately in which no foreign cultural context is involved, for it might hinder students understanding.

Keywords: cultural content in cloze test.

ISLAMIC LIFE RESOURCE PACK AS A SUPPORTING TEACHING MATERIALS FOR JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Wahju Kusumajanti

Most of Indonesian students are muslims, yet we rarely teach or introduce Islamic things in English. Except for students who live in Islamic boarding schools, English teachers who teach students in Islamic schools like Muhammadiyah, Ma’arif, etc. whose students not necessarily live in boarding schools- I believe- do not have time to think of giving such materials for their students for they are busy to pursue the target materials for national exams. Unwittingly, the students encounter problems when they have to explain religious ac-
VALIDATION SHEET

The paper entitled “Cultural Content in Reading Tests: A Comparative Study between Scores of A Cloze Test with Local Cultural Content and That of Foreign Cultural Content” written by Muchlas Suseno has been presented in the 4th International Conference on Teaching English as Foreign Language Held by Faculty of Letters, Muhammadiyah University of Purwokerto In May 5-6, 2012

Purwokerto, May 5, 2012

The Dean of Faculty of Letters
Muhammadiyah University of Purwokerto

The Chairman of the Organizing Committee

Titik Wahyuningsih, S.S., M.Hum
NIK: 2160272

Kristanto, S.S., M.Hum.
NIK: 2160369
<table>
<thead>
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**Conference Schedule**

Day: *Saturday 5 May 2012*

*Easy Circuit the Western Square: the Quest for the Best Speaker of English in Local Cultures*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Workshop</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:00</td>
<td>Afternoon Workshop</td>
<td>designing and implementing effective intervention and follow-up strategies</td>
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<td>Lunch</td>
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<td>13:00</td>
<td>Afternoon Workshop</td>
<td>integrating evidence-based practices into teaching and learning</td>
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<td>14:30</td>
<td>Afternoon Workshop</td>
<td>exploring the role of technology in mathematics instruction</td>
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<tr>
<td>16:00</td>
<td>Afternoon Workshop</td>
<td>discussing and sharing best practices in student assessment and evaluation</td>
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**Workshop 1**

- **Teaching Strategies Related to Student Characteristics**: A Case Study
  
  **Phill Wilson**
  
  - Methods: Case Study
  
  - Materials: Case Study
  
  - Duration: 2 Days

- **Practical Strategies for Early Years Teachers of English**
  
  **Julia Brown**
  
  - Methods: Practical Strategies
  
  - Duration: 3 Days

**Workshop 2**

- **Teaching Strategies Related to Student Characteristics**: A Case Study
  
  **Mark Anderson**
  
  - Methods: Case Study
  
  - Materials: Case Study
  
  - Duration: 2 Days

- **Practical Strategies for Early Years Teachers of English**
  
  **Julia Brown**
  
  - Methods: Practical Strategies
  
  - Duration: 3 Days
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<th>Time</th>
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<td>9:30-10:30</td>
<td>Keynote Address</td>
<td>Mohammad Fazl</td>
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<td>The Benefits of Using Model Dialogues and Play Scripts in Teaching</td>
<td>Dr. Michelle Kohler</td>
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<td>The Application of Multicultural Values in Teaching English</td>
<td>Yoohaun Lai + Wee Tiong</td>
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<td>Narrative Analysis: A Way to Know Students' Progress</td>
<td>Wee Lan Hooi</td>
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<td>Engaging Students' Interest in Writing by Using Facebook</td>
<td>Titi Mahnani</td>
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<td>15:15-16:00</td>
<td>Teaching English To The Students: How Similar Can It Be?</td>
<td>Eko Humaira</td>
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<td>Teaching English To The Students: The Study of The Quality of Teaching</td>
<td>Rahmad Hidayat</td>
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<td>Students to Appreciate and Understand Literary Works in Literature</td>
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<td>The English Language Tradition: Exploring the Use of Pronoun Theres, Theirs, and Theirs as a Lesson from the Quick's Literary Tradition</td>
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<td>The Introduction Ways to Craft the Reader for Homophone Speakers: Just Somewhere in Between Perspectives</td>
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<td>Ahmad Sajid Abdul Majeed</td>
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Certificate

Recipient: Muchlas Suseno

Precentor: A.S. A.

May 5-6, 2012

This note is to certify that

Dr. H. Syamsudal Isyad, M.H.
Rector,

University of Muhammadiyah Purwokerto

Chairperson:

Khrisnanto, S.S., M.Hum.

Organizing Committee

Purwokerto, May 6, 2012
Cultural Content in Reading Tests: A Comparative Study between Scores of a Cloze Test with Local Cultural Content and that of Foreign Cultural Content.

MUCHLAS SUSENO

English Language Study Program, Department of English and Literature
Faculty of Language and Art, State University of Jakarta.
2nd floor, O building Campus UNJ Rawamangun, Jakarta, Indonesia
email: muchlas-suseno@unj.ac.id; susenosaja@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The research was conducted to compare scores of achievement in reading for those who were tested using a modified cloze test, in which foreign cultural content was modified into local cultural contexts, and those who were given non-modified test. For this purpose researcher set up two classes, one being the treatment group and the other control group. In the beginning both groups received the same treatment in the sense that they were taught using modified and non-modified reading texts. They were also familiarized with the same forms of cloze test. It was only the technique of testing that was different.

This experimental research was conducted in a senior high school (SMA) Jakarta, involving 60 students for each group. They were chosen randomly from five classes in that school. Data was collected using two kinds of cloze test, one was modified form and the other was original. The research instrument was considered reliable after being tried out ($r_{tt} A = 0.48$ and $r_{tt} B = 0.42$). Data was analyzed using t-test, with $\alpha = 0.05$ and $df = 118$ obtaining ($t = 2.62 > t_{tab} = 1.66$).

The research finding concludes that students doing modified cloze tests get higher scores of achievement than those doing original cloze test. Therefore, it is wise if teachers, when developing materials of instruction, adapt and modify reading text material so that foreign cultural content might be contextualized into local content. By so doing reading tests could be developed appropriately in which no foreign cultural context is involved, for it might hinder students understanding.

Keywords: cultural content in cloze test.
BACKGROUND

Content might be defined as “matter dealt with in a field of study”. This suggests that content is equivalent to what has traditionally been referred to as subject matter (Anderson, et. al, 2001: 12). However, confusion often arises between subject matter as the knowledge in an academic discipline and subject matter as the materials used to convey the knowledge to students. In this regards, further, Anderson suggests that subject matter content be packaged in some way, such as text books, grade levels, and courses. Packaging might also involve selection and content organization so that it can be adapted to comply with students background (Anderson, et. al, 2001: 13). It is in such a context that this research is about in which the content organization and selection involve cultural aspects in reading texts.

Reading is much more than just recognizing words on a page. Knowing the meaning and function of words being read is naturally basic, but understanding those words in their context is imperative (Adams, 1989: 12). This means that correctly knowing meaning and function of words will be affected very much by understanding the contexts where such words are used. This is true because there are no neutral words and forms. Meaning is located neither solely in our linguistic resources nor in each individual’s mind. Rather, it resides in between these two interdependent spheres, in the interaction, the dialogue, that is realized in our lived moments of social action. (Bakhtin, 1981 in Hall, 2002: 12). Researches claim that human minds do not process printed words in a serial, linear, step-by-step process. Nor do they process print as ‘visual tape recorders’. Rather, they interpret what is read in terms of what is already known, and integrate it with the content of what is being read (Nunan, 1999: 256).

Competence of knowing meaning and function of words in relation with the contextual features is what Hymes called appropriateness, one key component in communicative competence. This component might lead students to use language appropriately. (Hymes, 1972 in Hall, 2002: 106). In such a competence it is
imperative that students know the language code as far as appropriateness is concerned. In addition, understanding what to say to whom, and how to say it appropriately in any given situation is also important to know. Further, it involves the social and cultural knowledge speakers are presumed to have which enable them to use and interpret linguistic forms (McKay and Hornberger, 1996: 363). Based on such statement, therefore, curriculum of language teaching is designed to accommodate material of instruction in which focus of teaching should be addressed to facilitate learners to attain communicative competence.

With regards to a correlation between the vocabulary of a language and the beliefs, values, and needs present in a particular culture of its native speakers, there is a little doubt that such a correlation does exist (Whorf, 1940; Witherspoon, 1977; Hill & Mannheim, 1992 in McKay and Hornberger, 1996: 360). It is in this belief that a great deal of cross-cultural misunderstanding might occur when the meanings of words being used by people who are speaking the same language are interpreted in radically different ways. To clarify such a statement, McKay and Hornberger propose a good example of an incident experienced by a Turkish visitor to the United States who refused to consume a hot dog because he inferred that it was made of dog meat, which was against his religious beliefs to eat (McKay and Hornberger, 1996: 360).

It is very possible that misunderstanding as stated above might also happen in the domain of reading activities. This means that readers might experience a similar incident in which misunderstanding occurs due to failure to interpret meaning and function of words in the reading texts. Such a failure relates to and is caused by cross-cultural aspects. To illustrate the misunderstanding, Levine, Baxter and McNulty (1987: 23) give a culture puzzle of a case about an American woman. She is very surprised to read a letter from a Japanese friend who has just gotten married. In the letter, the Japanese woman writes a description of her husband, "My husband is not very handsome". Of course the American woman is surprised with what her friend writes. She wonders why her friend makes such a description. Is it the time that the Japanese wife is trying to tell that she does not like her
husband very much? It is puzzling her because in American culture it is considered disrespectful to say such a sentence. Whereas in Japan a person would be considered boastful and not modest enough if she/he compliments family members in front of others. Instead, they prefer to say something slightly negative.

Realizing that in reading texts, cultural content is invariably present therefore it is suggested that teachers modify the material of instruction in reading classes in order to only accommodate cultural content that is understood by students. By so doing, misinterpretation might not occur. This would facilitate students with opportunities to obtain total comprehension in reading. In other words it is to say that efficient comprehension will take place when ongoing interaction occur between the reader’s existing knowledge, which is often culturally based, and new information presented in the texts (Carell and Eisterhold in Bruder and Henderson, 1986:1).

It is very broad, indeed, to talk about dimension of culture and its relationship with language. Therefore, it is wise to limit and pick up only a small part of it. Moran (2001: 36) identifies how language and culture appears in five dimensions of culture, such as (1) products, (2) practices, (3) perspectives, (4) communities, and (5) persons. This research is, then, focused on dimension number one – products. The products of a culture range from isolated objects, artifacts, or tools to places, complex social institutions, and other constructions, like art, literature, architecture, and music. To manipulate or use these varied products, members of the culture use language. As a matter of fact many cultural products, such as literature, tax codes, telephone directories, operating instruction, and passports, consist entirely of language (and the paper they are printed on). In such a case, it is likely that products of culture, such as the ones mentioned above, are first and mostly expressed in nouns and their related words, as far as words are concerned. Nouns, including mostly proper nouns refer to names of people, street, event and such things (Leech, Cruickshank, and Ivanic, 2001: 302).

When teaching reading has run and managed appropriately in which teachers use modified reading texts, testing will probably run effectively in the
sense that students will find it fair and challenging. This is true because, as far as reading activity is concerned, readers will be applying certain schemata that will assist them in extracting appropriate meaning. Schemata relate to background information and cultural experience to carry out effective interpretations as far as reading is concerned (Brown, 2004: 185). Readers whose schemata do not accord with the ideas in the text will have greater difficulty in reading than those who bring the same knowledge and cultural background in it. Vocabularies carry a large part of a language speaker’s cultural and background knowledge (Mckay, 2006: 221). In this case, the keyword of schemata technique is association. It is to associate background knowledge with words and phrases in the reading texts. For the purpose of learning a new language, association will be effective when it is personally meaningful to the learner and the material to be reviewed must have significance (Oxford, 1990: 39).

There are various models in testing reading and cloze test is one among the others. The word cloze was coined by educational psychologists to capture the Gestalt psychological concept of ‘closure’, that is, the ability to fill in gaps in an incomplete image and supply, from background schemata, omitted details (Brown, 2004: 201). Cloze tests are usually a minimum of two paragraphs in length in order to account for discourse expectancies. In a cloze test typically every seventh word (plus or minus two) is deleted, but many cloze test designers choose deletions according to the grammatical or discourse functions of the words.

Two approaches to the scoring of cloze tests are commonly used, (1) the exact word method, and (2) the appropriate word method. In the first method, credit is given to test-takers only if they insert the exact word that was originally deleted, whereas the second one, credit is given when test-takers can supply any word that is grammatically correct and that makes good sense in the context (Brown, 2004: 202).

This research is then conducted to find out whether foreign cultural content in reading texts gives more burdens to students when they are doing reading tests. In other words I mean that test-takers might encounter difficulties to comprehend
the text because they cannot apply certain schemata which is very useful to interpret meaning of words in the text. This is possible because their background knowledge is lacking.

**METHODOLOGY**

This research was conducted using experiment method in which there were two groups, one was the experiment group and the other was the control group. It’s the testing technique, modified and non-modified cloze tests, that were experimented. The first group was tested using modified cloze test, whereas the latter was tested using non-modified cloze test. To avoid bias, both groups received the same treatment in which they were taught reading skills using modified and non-modified reading texts. They were also familiarized with the same forms of cloze tests. In other words, both groups received the same treatment, two times meeting. To apply such an experiment a counter balance design was applied (Chihara, Sakurai, and Oller, 1987: 146; Isaac, 1980: 44). It was only the technique of testing that was different in which experiment group was tested using a modified cloze test and control group was given a non-modified cloze test. Table 1 below is data during treatment.

**Table 1. Data of Treatment Using Counter Balance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLASS GROUP</th>
<th>MEETING</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXPERIMENT</td>
<td></td>
<td>Modified Cloze Test</td>
<td>Non-modified Cloze Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTROL</td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-modified Cloze Test</td>
<td>Modified Cloze Test</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were 60 students, from two classes, in each group who were chosen randomly from five classes. To obtain data of research two research instruments were developed, one was a modified cloze test (instrument B), and the other was a non-modified cloze test (instrument A). Both instruments were tried out to guarantee the reliability. Data of try out was analyzed using KR-21 formula. From the analysis it was concluded that both instruments were reliable ($r_{tt}$ A = 0.48 and
Modification was done by changing all proper names that were foreign culturally bound into the ones of ‘culture-friendly context.

The reading text to be made both modified and non-modified cloze tests were taken from a material of workshop, “Teaching Reading for EFL Class”, written by Anderson (1992). The reading text was then changed to make a cloze test by deleting every fifth words, whereas the first and the last sentence were kept complete. When the fifth word was proper name, name of place or number, it was the next word to be deleted. There were 20 test items in each instrument. Appropriate word method was applied to score the students work. By such a method, students get a credit when they could supply any word that is grammatically correct and that makes good sense in the context. Correct answer gets 1 credit score and wrong answer gets 0 credit score.

RESULT, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Data of the research were analyzed using a T-test formula with $\alpha = 0.05$ and $df = 118$ obtaining $(t = 2.62 >, t_{tab} = 1.66)$. This means that the null hypothesis that reads “There was no difference between scores of achievement of those who were tested with a non-modified cloze test and those who were given a modified cloze test”, could be rejected. In other words it is to say that the scores of achievement between students of experimental group and those of control group were different in the sense that the score of first group is higher than that of second group.

It is very possible that cultural adjustment that is made by modifying reading text of foreign cultural content, such as culturally strange and unfamiliar words, into familiar cultural content may facilitate students to obtain total comprehension in reading. This is possible because students can apply a particular schemata technique. When it is so, students will find a cloze test interesting and challenging.

Based on such research finding, it is wise if teachers, when developing materials of instruction, adapt and modify reading text material so that foreign
cultural content might be contextualized into local content. By so doing reading tests could be developed appropriately in which no foreign cultural context is involved, for it might hinder students understanding. However, teachers must give special attention with the fundamental principles of communicative language testing in which the need for a correspondence between language test performance and language use is of prime importance (Bachman and Palmer, 1996 in Brown, 2004: 10). In other words, in modifying materials of reading tests teachers should maintain the authenticity of the texts. This is the problem that language assessment experts face, in which the tasks tended to be artificial, contrived, and unlikely to mirror language use in real life (Brown, 2004: 10).

REFERENCES


