Globalization VS Localization of English: Should EFL Learners Lose their Identity?

Defry Azhari
Universitas Negeri Malang, Indonesia
Email: defryazharii@gmail.com

Abstract: Globalization means the spread of English which is used as a paramount consideration in communicating around the world. EFL teachers in Indonesia intently encourage their students to have good English as a survival tool in this modern era by teaching them standard English. In the same time, localization of English appeared in the process of acquiring or learning English when the students have their own way in using English by mixing it with their own culture. This issue is crucial to be discussed since Indonesian EFL learners spread in various cultures, which affect their identity in using foreign language. This paper aims to deliver some ways in bridging between globalization and localization of English by considering the following aspects: (1) deciding students’ purpose in learning English, (2) delineating cultural aspects to be included in teaching process, (3) incorporating cultural aspects in teaching material, (4) implementing, and (5) evaluating the material. This framework can be consideration for teachers in designing the teaching material to face globalization and localization issue in EFL teaching.

Keywords : globalization, localization, identity

It is a cliche when we say that English is an international language. It has been an inseparable topic in every discussion related to the use of English as language of international communication. The increasing number of people who use English around the world make it became an important factor for students’ survival in the future. The importance of English has increased since it has a strategic role in expressing science and technology because of its complete terms to explain every matter related to modern concept in both areas (Gunarwan, 2000). It brings English as a language that students must learn not only to communicate globally but also to gain knowledge from around the world.

Because of its strength in many sides, we cannot ignore the globalization of English. It has gotten special status that is recognized by many countries in the world (Mckay, 2009). English is no longer a language that is only used by people in western but also in eastern and many parts around the globe. Special status of English is strengthened by the use of this language in the website, caution, news, or advertisement. From the view of field work, English also take an important role as one of indicator that an employee has a good competence in communicating and making relation. For those reasons, English has been required as a subject in every level of education in many countries.

Indonesia also requires English to be learned by students from secondary education. English taught to the students in Indonesia is English that encourages them to be able using English as near as native speakers. Teacher set many teaching activities to make students having a good competence in English. The students are assumed can speak English well if they can use it properly to the native English. On the other side, the students themselves have their own way in using English since they do not meet native English every time as situated in western country. Their English tend to be adapted to their needs in communicating with their friends who are non-native speakers (NNS). This adaptation surely involved students’ culture as part of their
identity. As the result, the English learned in the country that is not included in western country such Indonesia, is not exactly the same as English used in western country. This phenomenon can be called as localization of English where English has mixed with various culture of local area where it is used.

Localization of English must be a consideration in teaching English because teacher usually tends to teach a standard English which includes western culture without conceiving students’ culture as part of their identity. This paper aims to discuss how to bridge the phenomenon of globalization and localization of English in the classroom in order to achieve more useful English for learners.

**GLOBALIZATION AND LOCALIZATION**

Globalization refers to the phenomenon where almost the whole people in the globe use English for communicating. English has its global status since there are many people around the world use it for speaking in order to convey their intention (Crystal, 2003: 67-69). Historically, The dispersion of English before it united world to communicate in one global language was started by two diasporas (Kachru, 1992) that have distinct historical, sociocultural, ideological, linguistic, and pedagogical contexts. It was began by migration of English-speaking people from Great Britain to Australia, North America, and New Zealand. These native English native speakers have good authority in the countries that influence the use of English as they daily language. The advancement of Great Britain in their industry also encourages people to master its language. These countries, then, known as the countries that use English as their native language. The diffusion of English in many countries also resulted by colonialism and other political and economical factors. England also had many colony countries where the colonial official use English in communicating. For political reason, these countries got their independence by being common wealth countries of England or totally free without being common wealth countries. English is used in these countries as official language, which is used in education, government, and other formal situation while in daily life English is mixed with local language. Because of the power and authority that is possessed by countries where English as their native language such United States of America and United Kingdom, other countries, which has no history of migration of English speaking people or colonialism need to learn English well in order to be able in communicating and getting information.

The three circles proposed by Kachru (1985) might be a good way in interpreting the use of English around the world. These circles consist of inner, outer and expanding circle. Inner circle is the position of countries where English use as native language (ENL) that the speakers are estimated more than 329 million. The circle consists of The Great Britain, America, Australia, and New Zealand. The outer circle consist of they that had been colonized by inner circle countries such Malaysia, Singapore and India which the speakers can be more than 430 million. They use English as their second language (ESL) that is used to deliver information and communicate in formal situation such education and government while other countries that use English as foreign language (EFL) are include in the expanding circle which is estimated consist of more than 750 million speakers. These countries position English as the compulsory subject in every level of education since their needs to be able in joining in international competition as well as economy, politics, or education. The globalization of English appears in these three circles since all of countries are involved in these circles and communicate using English. However, Kachru emphasizes that the circles are only interpretation of English’s status in every country and how its function. This circles’ concept admitted identity of every nation without assumed to be control by any ‘native’ group or otherwise.
Uncontrollable spread of English around the globe, make it flexible to be use and adapt by many nations. It brings the emergence various kind of English that has been mixed with the culture of where it is used. This phenomenon, then, we calls as localization of English. The phenomenon is the consequence of English as an international language that has been conventionally accepted as a tool to bridge different language across the globe. Smith (1987) has pointed out three characteristics of an international language. Firstly, in using English, the non inner circle countries are not necessary to apply similar culture like what native speaker possess in order to use language effectively. This character represents the freedom of using language without dependable to learn its culture in order to use it well. Language can be learned as the need of communication by also including the cultural norm as where it is used. Secondly, an international language becomes denationalized that means language is not possessed by only one or group of countries. The world’s society is the owner of the language while native speakers cannot judge that the language is theirs and people must place them as the target of learning. Thirdly, English is only a tool of communication that helps people in delivering their ideas and culture. It indicates that local culture that is brought by the language learner or user can be used while they are communicating in English.

The characteristics of an international language proposed by Smith is supported by Crystal (1997) who pointed out that English is no longer possessed by native speakers in the inner circle since they are less than population of speakers in outer and expanding circle. The speakers spread out in both different accents and level of competencies out of inner circle’s border. English language has been recognized as a tool for conducting teaching and learning around the world (Flowerdew & Peacock, 2001; Lauder, 2008). That means every research, publication, business and commerce also utilize English to convey its content in order to be used by other people in different countries.

Indonesian government must realize the potential use of English, which has many advantages in wide areas. The areas consist of economic and business, international relation, international travel and safety, education, communication and media. Firstly, in economic and business, USA that has first number in the rank of economy requires every actor of international market to be able in using English especially multinational business, which has international branches. Secondly, international relation requires diplomats to master some different languages for their career but if there is a situation when they do not master a certain language, they are required to use English communicatively because English has been recognized as the lingua franca. The third is international travel and safety. It refers to the use of English as language used for navigation at sea and for air traffic control. Fourthly, in education, English use as formal language to publish an international article, medium of teaching and learning in the classroom and official letter among international institutions of education. The fifth is communication. The information around the globe spread out on the internet consist of almost 80% in English. In spite of the fact that internet has grown to handle various languages and roman scripts (Hussain et al., 2005), mastering English is still a prominent skills in order to maximize overall use of information on the internet. Lastly, media, which commonly uses English as its language in order to be understood by different people around the globe. These media are various from printed such newspaper until media on electronic such global television and radio broadcasting.

THREAT OR OPPORTUNITY?

The flexibility of English as an international language and its use brings some difference perspectives and attitudes toward its existence in a certain country. In Indonesia, issue of English use also appears as debatable topic that creates two contrary arguments. In one side,
English is seen as the paramount consideration to take a good position in international competition especially in education, economic and technology sides.

Every new knowledge as the result of the research should be written in English before published to a certain journal. This is an important step to ensure that people around the world can understand and comprehend the content of the research. Other example of education’s need of English is communication tool needed in an international seminar where the participants come from different countries and native language. In this situation, people will tend to use general language that can help them in sharing ideas each other. In economy side, the situation can be seen when there is a multi-national meeting where the company directors need to make a deal. They are from different countries, which have different language. Here, the existence of English as a global language is needed to bridge their ideas before achieving a certain decision or agreement. Technology also support the needs of English since it can make the user became easier operating it. For instance, there is a kind of super car that will enter Indonesians’ market. The process of assembly will do by Indonesian. In this case, the guiding book of the car or the instructor that will train employees must use single language that easy to understand and have been used generally by other countries. If the guiding book or the instructor uses difficult language or uncommon language, the process accepting of technology will be slow. Because of that, English is often used to give guidance in using a certain technology. As explanation above, it emphasizes the needs of students to learn English well. By mastering that language, they will learn other culture and compete in the global market (Harwati, L.N, 2012). Moreover, job opportunities for students will increase significantly in technological and scientific area when they can communicate well in English (Lauder, 2008). In other words, English is unavoidable language that should be learned by the students to face bright future.

In spite of the fact that English is required for students as a modal to compete in globalization era, there is negative perspective related to this point of view. English is assumed can devaluate Indonesian language as the official language in Indonesia (Suyanto as cited in Onishi, 2010, p. 1). The students are predicted will be more interested in learning and mastering English since it is more prestigious than Indonesia that is only usable in Indonesia. Moreover, mastering other foreign language will be considered unnecessary since English can cover almost every communication in life’s need. The decrease of students’ motivation in learning will be equal to their language quantity. However, the use of English in Indonesia are useful to enrich Indonesians’ words that many of them derived from English word.

**STATUS OF ENGLISH IN INDONESIA**

The status of English consists of English as native language, second language, and foreign language. English status is depended on classification of country that can be divided into inner, outer and expanding circle countries (Kachru, 2005). Based on this definition, Indonesia is included into expanding circle where English is recognized as foreign language, which has been one of the compulsory subject course in almost every level of education in Indonesia. Indonesian government also placed English at the third position after Bahasa Indonesia, the regional vernaculars (Lauder, 2008).

The status of English in Indonesia represents how its role is played. English is used as a tool that can be used to encourage nationalistic and patriotic in the form of acceleration of country’s development. Indonesian can use it to convey and accept any information, knowledge or technology. This phenomenon is similar as Lauder’s point of view (2008) that states the essentiality of English has its restriction for only the merits in accessing information that can support development such as economic growth.
As the response of the Indonesians’ need of English in the future, the government has announced and amended policy related to the recognition of English as foreign language regarding to its advantage to accelerate development. It represents the priority of learning English although it does not use in daily communication as the first language (Simatupang, 1999: 64). The government policy related to foreign language until recognition of English as prior foreign language was started Guidelines of the State Policy (GBHN) of 1983 and 1988, which is said that non-native language policy was not integrated but in the GBHN of 1993, the guideline on non-native languages, particularly English language, was clearly specified. The revising of some points in Government Guideline No. 55, 56 and 57/1988 was done in Government Guideline No. 28, 29/1990. The guideline approved the use of English language in schools. Furthermore, Government Guideline of No 57/1957/1988 also supported the use of English Language as a foreign language and as a means of communication and interaction in the university. Later on, it was incorporated into Government Guideline No 60/1999 on the use of English language in all higher education.

The policy of the Indonesian government has given a clear insight related to the importance of English for students in Indonesia. It also implied that kind of English used in Indonesia is academic English, which is useful in the presentation in international seminar, publication of academic articles, and acceptance of new knowledge form overseas. This English is also a minimal standard of English required for students that color the content of English taught in almost every level in Indonesia.

STUDENTS’ IDENTITY

Although government’s policy has implied that English standard used for teaching and learning in Indonesia is an academic English, Indonesia still seems imitate to either British or American English. It is reasonable since the non-native speakers’ country dependent on the standards set by native speakers from the inner circle (Jenkins, 2003: 16) As country in expanding circle, Indonesia cannot avoid its dependability to inner country where native speakers live especially Britain and America. However, Smith and Kachru (in Alatis, 2005, p. 32) have a point of view against Jenkin’s that neither British nor American English can be used as a standard. It is caused since English becoming an international language, it has no longer possessed by native-speakers in inner circle country. The standard required by The Standards for Foreign Language Learning (NSFLEP 1999) for teaching English to foreign students must integrate the philosophical perspectives, the behavioral practices, and the products—both tangible and intangible—of a society.

The requirements of NSFLEP are also well known as the 3P model of culture. Philosophical perspectives consist of what members of a culture think, feel, and value. Behavioral Practices includes how members communicate and interact with one another. Products consist of technology, music, art, food, literature, and everything that members of a group create, share, and transmit to the next generation. These three aspects indirectly explicate the importance of culture to be included in the English teaching and learning in Indonesia as students’ identity. Since learning language means learning the culture, teachers must be aware of culture will be included in the process of teaching and learning. It is very often western culture is emphasized in the language teaching while it is not appropriate to the students’ identity. Even worse, students get more difficulty to both learning language and new culture brought by the language.

Integrating culture has became a central topic in considering form of ELT since the government needs society to take the advantage of English to accelerate development, but still in their own identity. There is a demand to filter everything that is unrelated to country’s needs.
even endanger the existence of the country. Teaching and learning process is no longer teacher centre. To achieve this purpose, teacher must be aware of concept “who you are” (Joseph, 2006, p.486, Bloomer, 2005, p.203) that in this context refers to the students. Students have different identities depend on their origin, background knowledge and environment where the students grow. Moran (2001) explained that identity consist of both explicit and tacit that deal with sense of self, values, beliefs and practices (p.99). It is also associated with the membership of other group that make identity can be widely separated as group identities, national identities, gender identities, religious identities, social class identities etc (Joseph, 2006; Jones, 2000; Block, 2006). By observing the use of language, we can see clearly these identities in their effort to position themselves in their conversation toward different situations in the form of linguistics practice (i.e. Page & Tabouret-Keller, 1985, cited in Risager, 2006). Therefore, Norton (2006) said that identity has opened up new research directions such as identity and investment in the target language, identity and imagined communities (learner’s exposure in the target language), identity categories (sex, gender, race) and educational changes, identity and literacy (learner’s ability to read and write).

In foreign language context, students’ identity may in some extent different when language learner uses his/her own language. Risager (2006) says that to participate in linguistic practice, a foreign-language speaker normally involves completely different identity dimensions from when one is speaking one’s first language” (p.124) which is called third place identity (Kramsch, 1993), the state where one is in between his own language and target language. In intercultural language classroom, this issue may be addressed appropriately by giving questionnaire on „intercultural sensitivity”. It is an advantage in that teachers can spot where students can put their identity in. This result may implicate to the choice of materials presented for classroom teaching (Bernett & Allen, 2003).

Moran (2001) outlines four stages of intercultural learning in which students can learn in the classroom. These are: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation, active experimentation (p.18). Similar to these notions, Commonwealth of Australia (2004) sets five principle of intercultural pedagogy; active construction; making connections; social interaction, reflection and responsibility. These aspects explore pedagogical notions in which students and teachers are „engaged in creative process of learning” (Crozet & Liddicoat, 1999, Phillips, 2001). For example teachers relate the concept of wedding in students’ culture with that of in target culture. For further understanding students may interact with the native speakers of target language.

BRIDGING GLOBALIZATION AND LOCALIZATION OF ENGLISH IN ELT

The international language status having by English has made it is used globally as number one language that must be mastered if someone need to compete across countries. In its spreading around the globe, it has been mixed with the local culture that emerges localization of English. There is new English that is used by the non-native speakers because they talk in English by their own way, which may be not acceptable to native speakers from their pragmatic and speech act point of view. However, it is not a bad thing since English has out of its native-like boundary that make it more flexible to be modified for different user.

The users of English grow every day since countries encourage its society to learn English. The purpose of using this language is also various since it possess a strategic position in many areas. To gain the purposes, English is taught in almost every level of education in foreign countries included Indonesia and it also become a requirement to get a job position. By these developments, the actors of ELT have been divided into some different parts of practices such as linguists, pedagogical practitioners, education experts, and language policy makers.
As foreign country, Indonesia already has language policy contended English’s status and place it in the third of three main categories of language in Indonesia. The paramount thing that must be created by the government today is a clear and objective curriculum for language education. It is like Daloğlu (1996) who pointed out that kind of curriculum is needed to realize effective delivery of high quality language education. The government must be able to develop a curriculum that clearly spells out how knowledge can be acquired constitutes an important phase towards realizing good quality language dissemination. Moreover, systematic assessment regarding to the implementation of the curriculum must be set up to ensure every school has the same degree in implementing it.

Language curriculum is a big plan to facilitate students to learn foreign language effectively. However, it cannot be success if teachers are failed in understanding and applying it in the classroom. A good foreign language teaching is the way students are taught how to use the language without losing their identity. Culture, as the representation of students’ identity must be well incorporated in the classroom. It can help students to learn and apply it in daily life rather than act and imitate native speakers although it is not easy to reduce the effect of native culture in the language since language and culture is inseparable. Moreover, Risager (2005) pointed out that second language can be used to teach culture to the learner, and Kramsch (1997) stated that culture would always exist wherever language is used and learned.

In spite of the fact that teachers must realize students’ identity, it does not mean that they must separate between natives’ culture and students’ culture in two different things. Teachers must respond this needs wisely by introducing language target culture by class activities and gives clear explanation of distinction between what students’ and natives’ culture have. It is injudicious when students only know their own culture without realizing others. They will grow to be conservative people who are not easy to accept a new change or point of view out of their culture boundaries. The students will recognize their own culture as their identity proudly when they know their significance to others (Hall, 1996). Based on this idea, teachers are encouraged to teach students by delivering local culture material through EFL in class. It can create the situation where the students interact and negotiate with both their culture and foreign culture. Learning English by using the material contended local culture, not only increase students’ ability in mastering English’s skill but also their capability in expressing their own culture by using English (Prastiwi, 2013). In other words, there is no other better ways in bridging globalization and localization phenomenon in country where English as foreign language than collaborating local culture with the use of English to communicate it.

The Five Steps

As we have discussed above, the best way to build a good connection between globalization and localization is by delivering local culture using English. Another problem will
appear when teacher needs to deliver their material to students. It should be about which culture that is included in the teaching process. Based on review on some articles and researches, this paper try to suggest some steps for teacher in creating material for students.

The first thing should teacher do is deciding the purpose of the teaching and learning process. Melchers and Shaw (2003:191) proposed three guiding questions in deciding the purpose of English language teaching. The three questions are: (1) what exposure do we give the learners, (2) what production model should we choose, and (3) what production target should we aim for. The first question related to what rather influence that will we bring in teaching students whether British or American using different kind of media. Production model refers to the choice of spoken or written material that will be used in the ELT. Production target will be meant as the aims of students in learning language. These three aspects will be various if we compare from one place to others. In my opinion, the third aspect is the most important thing to be considered by the teacher since teaching and learning process have grown into students-center. By knowing the purpose of the students in learning language, teacher can decide what exposure and production model that will be used in the teaching learning process. For instance, the exposure and production model for between students who need to be able in mastering grammar will be different to they who need to be able speak English well. In mastering grammar, students need to have a standard grammar used and they need written production model while in mastering speaking, students need to have British or American standard in pronouncing English and they need spoken model. However, since Indonesia is included in the expanding circle, where English learned as foreign language, the learners will need to be able in understanding as many accents and varieties as possible (Mukminatien, 2012). In other words, the three consideration above may be effective for private school, course or education institution whose specialization in ELT. On another hand, for public school, teachers must creatively select material and do ELT for the purpose of intercultural awareness. It will be useful since students have various cultures and backgrounds in the classroom.

Secondly, the teachers must delineate involvement of cultural aspects. Elements of culture refer to things like the beliefs, values, customs, products, and the communication styles of a given culture or society (Cohen et al. 2003). It will be a complicated thing if the teachers included all of these element without knowing consideration in incorporating them into ELT. Teachers must be good in selecting these elements in order to fulfill the needs of students. There are three kinds of culture to lead teachers in creating a good ELT. They are source culture, target culture, and international target culture (Cortazzi & Jin in McKay, 2002). Source culture refers to the culture that comes from the society where the students live. Target culture means the culture that target language brings, which should be selected by teachers before it is delivered to the students because not all of target cultures are appropriate and useful for students. International culture can be meant as the values that are generally accepted by all of country. This kind of culture is needed to increase intercultural awareness among the students.

The elements mentioned by Cohen at the beginning are included in the source culture. Teacher can identify these elements from the students by using “iceberg” theory proposed by Hall (1976) who divides culture into three parts that is surface culture, sub-surface culture and deep culture. Surface culture includes food, national costumes, traditional music and dance, literature, and specific holidays. In the sub-surface culture section, students could list notions of courtesy, body language, gestures, touching, eye contact, personal space, facial expressions, conversational patterns, and the concept of time. The sub-surface culture relate to the students’ behavior, which consist of unspoken rule that is used in the conversation. Teachers can deliver a clear distinction between students’ culture and its unique from other culture especially inner circle countries in the form of teaching material. The deep culture is the most difficult part to be identified by teacher since it has been seen as a normal thing that can only differentiate by
compare it to other cultures. After the teachers get all of the information related to source culture, teachers can combine and distinct it with the target culture and international culture, particularly contrastive culture among these three cultures.

The third stage is incorporation cultural aspects in ELT material. After selecting element of culture, teachers can insert cultural aspects in the teaching material that generally consist of; religious ceremonies, folktales, courtesy, and politeness (Cahyono, 2013). For instance, teacher can provide material related to the Muslim’s annually celebration, “lebaran” for the students. By giving this material, teacher can explain international culture such as how is “lebaran” celebrated in other muslim’s countries such as Saudi Arabia, Turkic, or Pakistan. In the distinction and comparison with target culture, teacher can provide and explanation related to similar “lebaran” in inner circle countries since most of them are not muslim.

The fourth stage is Implementation. In this stage, the teachers apply the material that has been created before. Teachers must ensure that every student can clearly get the ideas of intercultural awareness that is the purpose of the material made. The last is evaluation stage. While the teacher implementing the material and leading activities in the classroom, they observe the process of the teaching learning process, whether the material and activities have been successful enough to build intercultural awareness in their mind. Teachers also need to evaluate the recent challenge related to language development for their students in order to increase their ability to compete in global field.

CONCLUSION

The most important thing to be considered in these five steps is how to create material and activities that encourage students to be aware of their own identity through learning English. From the assessment side, teachers need to move from a kind of assessment where students must be “native-like” to “intelligibility” (Mukminatien, 2012). It is not necessary the students must exactly imitate the native speakers in inner circle because the paramount English competence needed for them is ability to communicate in English, not to copy the native speakers of English. English in inner circle country should take a role as a basic of well English that keeps the language not too far from its origin. On the other side, students in foreign countries must have freedom of expressing themselves by using English in their own way. Teachers must realize this need because incorporation of students’ identity in English can enrich variety of English itself. At the same time, students will not only master in using English, but also be proud of their own identity.

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