

## Senior High School English Teachers' Knowledge of Intercultural Values

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**Abstract:** *The objective of this research was to know the level of senior high school English teachers' knowledge of intercultural values. The study was concerned with the English teachers' knowledge of intercultural value which is using a quantitative method, specifically, a survey study because it helped to describe the attitude, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of the population. In this study, the participants included 66 in-service Senior High School English teachers from different public school around Jember from the total number 207 of senior high school English teachers in Jember. The participant selected was using random sampling by delivering the questionnaire to all of Senior High School English teachers in Jember. The data of this study used Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS) which contains 20-item scales. The result of this study showed that among four dimensions of CQS, all of them got high level of senior high school English teachers' knowledge of intercultural value which in this case very important for teachers to communicate across various culture*

**Keyword:** Level of senior high school English teachers, Intercultural Values, Survey Design

### Introduction

The relationship between culture and language has been widely acknowledged as people from different cultures contact each other in order to face the globalization. In the process of communication, people from culturally diverse background tend to make some mistakes while communicating. Problem in communication commonly arises when someone from different social and culture is getting difficulties to understand each other. This difficulty come from people's lack of knowledge in terms of cultural context. Moreover, the fact that culture becomes one of the essential factors in communication not only occurs in everyday-life but also in the educational context. As Fantini (1995) said in his study, intercultural competence has become the main goal in language context among researchers and educators. Teaching English as a foreign or a second language is not only increasing students' level of language skill, but also the intercultural awareness among students.

The increasing attention of attitude and value for education and teaching environment has been noted in the last few decades (Sanchez, 2004). The aspects included in the teacher good competencies are not only skill and knowledge, but also attitude and value (Pantic & Wubbels, 2010). Van den Branden (2009) argued that the relationship between instructor's recognition and their activities in the classroom and cases that what language educators do in the classroom is roused by their prior knowledge, perception, and mind. In this case, it seems

that language should increase their competencies regarding attitude and value which play a pivotal role in the teaching-learning process.

The issue of teachers' value is widely known by researchers for decades. Pantic & Wubbels (2011) in their research explored teachers' moral values and relate them to the learner's preferences of cultural competence. Bouslama (2018) investigated the teachers' knowledge, perception, and understanding the concept of intercultural competence. Besides, Lei (2021) investigated the pre-service English teachers' intercultural competence and whether there are any differences between their IC (Intercultural Competence) levels and their gender. In most previous research studies, the researcher mostly explored the pre-service English teacher and learner's perception of value focused on belief, morals, attitude, gender, etc in the context of EFL learners. Considering the above-mentioned issue, it seems that teachers' knowledge about intercultural value is still underexplored.

Most of the previous studies only explored the importance of intercultural knowledge for pre-service English teachers and due to limited information about in-service teachers' perspective related to teachers' intercultural knowledge, in-service senior high school English teacher need to know further the knowledge of intercultural value.

## **Literature Review**

### **Cultural Value in the EIL Paradigm**

Culture has been an important issue among scholars in the field of EIL for the last two decades and has become an essential part of teaching and learning the second language (L2) (Li, 1998; Zang & Sung, 2013). The fact that culture is a part of English which is used in global communication to encourage the teacher especially English teacher to learn further about other cultures (Monfared et al, 2016). Byram (1988) defines culture as social communication which involves the way how people associate with others, share personal perception, and the truth of life. Besides, Spitzberg and Chagnon (2009:6-7) define culture as "attitudes, values, beliefs, rituals/customs, and behavioral patterns which are born naturally, thus, established and guarded by human being behavioral structurally".

These variables can be classified as an invisible culture which is out of conscious awareness and usually is not easy to identify (Weaver, 1986). Like an iceberg theory, Weaver (1986) also explain culture in many layers that is divided into the surface layer and the deeper layer. The surface layer mostly easy to know in our daily activity such as food, dress, music, language, celebrations, and any others while the deeper layer including education, decision making processes, individualism or group norms, etc. Moreover, people's daily activity and the way to communicate with each other between people from different background also involves the invisible culture which is mostly found in the deeper layer. The invisible cultural knowledge is not attaining through words alone, but rather through knowledge by giving further understanding to our cultural knowledge and people around us (Hanley, 1999). Therefore, language teaching gets culture to show the social variety which happens normally as one of appearance in ways of life, perspectives, and value (Holliday, 2011).

### **Cultural Value View from the Teachers' Perspective**

Culture is utilized to translate other individuals' activities or examples of reasoning. It also brings a big impact on the teachers' way to interpret the cultural value of EIL toward their teaching styles. Feldhusen (1997) argue that 'teachers' perception has some aspects in them such as teachers' knowledge, capability, and achievement. As Chan (2001) shows in his study that teacher should have competencies such as teaching, communicating, motivating, and facilitatings. Those competencies help the teacher to effectively teach in a different cultural setting. It is needed for the teacher to learn knowledge, skill, and attitude to make the teaching process effective in diverse cultural setting (Egne, 2015), especially in the country which has cultural diversity backgrounds. Moreover, Pierce (2017) states in his study that having a teaching learning process in a diverse classroom requires high ability in communication by adding the cultural elements in the curriculum.

### **Multi-dimensional Construct of Intercultural Intelligence**

The dimensions acquired in this questionnaire are divided into four dimensions which has relevancy to use in culturally diverse setting. The four dimensions are metacognitive dimension, cognitive dimension, motivational dimension, and behavioral dimension. Metacognitive dimension dealt with individual's capability to understand the cultural knowledge (Flavell, 1979) and how to anticipate a certain person' cultural preferences during the process of intercultural interaction. By understanding other's cultural preferences, it is easier to make judgement that has the relevance meaning with others.

The second dimension is cognitive dimension which focus on knowledge of the norm in culturally diverse setting (Ang et al, 2007). This dimension dealt with the social systems of others in different culture setting (Triandis, 1994). By acknowledging the social system of different culture, people will be easier to characterize the culture that might be similar or different in order to propose the good interaction with others in different cultural setting. The next dimension is motivational dimension which dealt the way people adapt positively in the culturally diverse situation. The last is behavioral dimension. This dimension reflects the capability to communicate with people from different cultural background verbally or non-verbal. Behavioral dimension attracted people to manage social behavior in intercultural situation in order to reduce the misperception in interpreting a certain cultural value.

### **Research Method**

To examine the teachers' knowledge of intercultural value, a survey study used in this present study. This design was used in this study because it helped to describe the attitude, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of the population. The data of this study related to English teachers' knowledge of intercultural value collected from a survey questionnaire. The questionnaire used Cultural Intelligence Scale (CIS) which consists of 20-items scale.

The CIS questionnaire was divided into four parts. The first part was metacognitive dimension that reflects the individual ability to understand cultural knowledge (Flavell, 1979). The second parts dealt with the cognitive dimensions that focus on knowledge of the norms in diverse culture (Ang et al, 2007). The next part was motivational dimension that expect people to adapt positively in culturally diverse situation. The last part was behavioral dimensions that reflects the capability to interact with other people in diverse culture in

verbal or non-verbal (Ang, 2007). The questionnaires contain the close-ended question. This study chose 66 in-service English teachers teachers came from different school in Jember, East Java.

After getting the score from the questionnaire of Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS) by using SPSS, the meaning of the intercultural value was described by linking the result of CQS with the elements of CQS questionnaire. Descriptive statistic was used in order to know the Senior High School English teachers' attitude toward each element of CQS questionnaire. To determine the level of each dimensions of intercultural value, the mean score of all dimensions were computed.

The criteria of intercultural values were shown below:

High level	: 3.50 < M < 5.00
Moderate level	: 2.50 < M < 3.49
Low level	: 1.00 < M < 2.49

### The Research Finding

The data of the questionnaire were calculated by using SPSS 25.0. Based on the calculation, the result had showed a good level of teachers' knowledge toward intercultural value.

**Table 1.** Descriptive Statistics for four dimensions in Early and Ang (2003)

<b>Dimension 1 (Metacognitive)</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Question number 1 to 4	3.87	0.635
<b>Dimension 2 (Cognitive)</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Question number 5 to 10	3.7	0.648
<b>Dimension 3 (Motivational)</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Question number 11 to 15	3.8	0.637
<b>Dimension 4 (Behavioural)</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Question number 16 to 20	3.49	0.709

Table 1 showed that each of dimensions had different score which indicated that teachers had different level of intercultural value knowledge. The first dimension got the mean score 3.87 with the standard deviation 0.635. From the criteria of intercultural value level, it had the high level of intercultural value from the total score 5.00. The second dimension was cognitive dimension that got the mean score 3.7 with the standard deviation 0.648 from the total mean score 5.00. It also had the high level of intercultural value for senior high school English teachers. The next dimension was motivational dimension which got the score 3.8 with the standard deviation 0.637. It indicated that teachers' knowledge of intercultural value had the high level in this dimension. The last dimension was behavioural dimension which got the lowest score among others dimension with the score 3.49.

### Discussion

The result of the analysis previously showed that among four dimensions of CQS, all of them got high level of senior high school English teachers' knowledge of intercultural

value which in this case very important for teachers to communicate across various culture. Among four dimensions of CQS, the highest level of intercultural value was metacognitive dimension. The level of each dimension come from the result of mean score and standard deviation. Mean score showed the average score of the group meanwhile the standard deviation showed the distribution of the data from the sample and to know how near the data with mean score. On table 1, it showed that most of all standard deviation close to 0 score. This indicated that the data distribution from the sample close to the mean score. From this result, we knew that most senior high school English teacher in Jember had a high level of intercultural value knowledge.

The first dimension had the highest level among the other four dimensions. By acknowledging the value of culture, it allowed the individual to proceed further whether their interpretation toward intercultural value was appropriate or not during the interaction with people from different cultural background. The second dimension was cognitive dimension which dealt with individual's understanding about the norm in culturally diverse setting. Understanding this dimension can help the individuals to learn about how the norms that occurs in the society may differ from each other and cause of the different behavioral within the society. Moreover, gaining the wider understanding toward intercultural value could make a further understanding about people's behavior and thought in certain cultural environment which was substituted by the globalization (Dayne, 2012).

The next dimension was motivational. Individual with high motivational dimensions were confident to dealt with challenges in culturally different situation. The last dimension was behavioral dimension. In this dimension, individuals need to manage their behavior to interact in the intercultural situations in order to reduce the misperception verbally or non-verbally (Ghahremani et al, 2010). In the teaching-learning situation, teachers needed to acknowledge this behavioral dimension further to communicate with students from different cultural background in order to avoid the misunderstanding between students and teacher.

After all the result of research were calculated, it could be concluded that the level of senior high school English teachers' knowledge in Jember toward intercultural value was high. From this result, we knew that senior high school English teachers in Jember were aware of culture related information and flexible in engaging themselves with other culture appropriately. As Sercu et al (2004) said that the more eligible teachers are regarding to the intercultural knowledge, it will be easier for them to promote intercultural knowledge to their learners.

## **Conclusion and Suggestion**

Based on the result of data analysis, it could be concluded that the level knowledge of intercultural value among senior high school English teachers showed a good result. The way teachers conduct the classroom, manage the teaching-learning materials, communicate with the students, and deliver the materials was influenced by their understanding of culture. This result had already been analysed using SPSS 25.0 with the level of four dimensions showed high level and the respondents' level of achievement also showed a good achievement. Along with the result of this research, senior high school English teachers were expected to have a

deep understanding of intercultural value that will be shared with students in the teaching-learning process as a source of knowledge.

However, there were some limitations for this research. This research was not deep research to know the English teachers' knowledge toward intercultural value. Thus, for future researchers were expected to conduct research using interview with senior high school English teachers in order to get further information about their understanding toward intercultural value. Moreover, the future researchers are expected to use the result of this study as their additional information or references to conduct further research related with senior high school English teachers' knowledge of intercultural value.

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