

Understanding Students' Experiences with Intercultural Learning Materials for Drama Subject in Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

Students' perceptions are highly important to evaluate the learning materials. The purpose of this study was to determine students' perceptions of using the intercultural learning material in the drama subject. The population of this research was the sixth-semester students of the English Department at Pasir Pengaraian University. The sample of this research was obtained by total sampling technique. The sample of this research was 34 students. The instrument of this research was the questionnaires, which used the Likert scale. It was developed by using intercultural learning and perception. It was distributed to 34 students consisting of 28 female students and 6 male students. The data were analyzed by using a statistical package to find out the students' total perceptions. The results showed that students had positive perceptions that were obtained from the three indicators, namely motivation, difficulties, and material efficacy of using intercultural learning material in the drama subject. The perception of motivation, difficulties, and material efficacy were categorized as positive perceptions. It has a percentage of 77.5%, 74.8%, and 75.8% for each indicator. Thus, intercultural learning material is effective learning material, especially in the drama subject.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Intercultural education can provide many benefits to students, such as intercultural knowledge, attitudes, and skills that will certainly be needed to participate in a global society (Bocanegra-Valle, 2015; Gómez Luis Fernando, 2018; Hasanah & Abdulrahman, 2021; Shadiev, Xueying, & Huang, 2020; Yassin, Razak, Qasem, & Mohammed, 2020). Besides, intercultural learning encourages students to respect, understand, and increase solidarity among individuals from different cultures,

such as ethnic, cultural, religious, and national groups (Gómez-Parra, 2020; Tran & Seepho, 2017). This intercultural learning approach aims to promote the knowledge of the world outside of their own, the formation of attitudes, support respectful discourse between cultures and act towards change and positivity (Adi, 2017; Jokikokko & Karikoski, 2016). This all creates a new educational transformation towards greater knowledge.

Intercultural communication can teach students effectively about global communication, and language teaching should give students greater chances to master intercultural communication. One of the other reasons for the importance of intercultural learning is that people speak different languages representing different cultures, and, depending on where they live, they will become closer to each other with the help of this learning strategy. However, Sabilah et al. (2018) state that in the cultural aspect, English is taught by elaborating on some cultural content specifically, for example, by promoting food, natural scenery, habits, and other things that students often encounter in their daily lives, and many more. This is useful for increasing their sensitivity to their surroundings, so when students come face-to-face with their interlocutors and the real culture of the target language, they are well prepared and useful for understanding intercultural communication. In this context, it is because language users' culture and language cannot be separated.

Considering the importance of intercultural learning in the learning process, intercultural learning materials need to be designed (Eripuddin, Jufrizal, & Agustina, 2023). Further, the intercultural learning material can grow the students' awareness about their cultures and others. The application of intercultural learning has been developed in drama subject. Eripuddin et al., (2022b) state that problems in the classroom often arise not because drama instruction is unimportant but because students lack access to adequate learning resources. The students' cultural identities were still present in their dramatic presentations. They were unable to see the similarities and distinctions between their own and the other cultures, and their performances showed the influence of their native language and culture. They were naturally unable to give a convincing performance in the theater. Students continue to struggle with performing drama because English is not their native language, and their culture also influences them. Through a better understanding of others and ourselves, intercultural learning can be one tool in our efforts to comprehend the complexity of the modern world. Also, it might hold the key to unlocking the entrance to a brand-new society.

Linked to the intercultural learning material, the intercultural learning has been developed by the previous studies. Furyanto, Putra, & Islamiah (2021) investigate the students' perception of intercultural reading material. The point of this study is the perception of the students in reading learning materials. Then, Eripuddin, Jufrizal, & Agustina (2022b) investigate the effectiveness of intercultural learning materials in teaching and learning drama subject. This study focused on the effect of intercultural learning materials on the learning process. However, the previous study is not enough yet to see the intercultural learning material in the teaching and learning process. Thus, one aspect is needs to be studied is the students' perception of intercultural learning material for the teaching and learning process.

In addition, perception means recognizing, compiling, and interpreting information so as to provide an understanding of the environment around them (Vo, 2017). Besides, perception is also not just passively receiving cues but also formed by communication between people, memory, learning, and attention that occurs in a social and cultural context (Démuth, 2012). Then, perception was a process that began with human sensing, in which the individual received a stimulus from the outside called the sensory process (Qiong, 2017; Woods, Luke, & Weir, 2010). The process was continued by the next process until a perception was created; the process started by our five senses was the previous process of perception. For example, through the eyes, ears, skin, and others.

Furthermore, according to Rahmadani (2022) by receiving information as well as processing messages, perception is the experience that a person has of things or occurrences. Here, experience is referred to as one's perception of things or occasions that they have encountered. While collecting

sensory information, their minds begin to interpret the messages given. As a result, they can form an opinion about whether this is good or bad. The perception as well as part of the evaluation to improve the learning process so that it can be suitable for students. Each person's perception is influenced by many factors, both from the outside and from within.

Based on the explanation above, there are some rationales for doing this study. Firstly, there are no studies to investigate the students' perception of intercultural learning material in higher education. Secondly, this study is a development of the previous study especially in investigating the intercultural learning materials. The last one, this study is the evaluation of the students' perceptions using intercultural learning materials. Further, the intercultural learning material itself can be used effectively in higher education. Thus, it is highly academic to investigate the student's perception using intercultural learning materials in the teaching and learning process. It is expected to help explore and evaluate the intercultural learning material in the learning process, especially in integrating, developing, and elaborating between English and Malay in students' learning materials.

2. METHODS

The researcher's design is quantitative descriptive. Sugiono (2013) claims that quantitative descriptive research explains how things happen when they are founded on facts and expressed in statements or phrases. This research was conducted on the sixth-semester students at the English Study Program Faculty of Teacher Training and Education at the University of Pasir Pengaraian, with a total number are 34 students (6 male and 28 female). The sample was obtained by the total sampling. Then, the questionnaires were used to gather data for the research.

Furthermore, the questionnaires were distributed to the students to collect the data. In this case, the researcher distributed the questionnaires that consisted of 20 close-ended questions, the researcher provided 20 minutes for the students to answer the questions. In addition, the data were analyzed by using the Likert scale method; using four categories of answer choices, namely SA (strongly agree), A (Agree), DA (Disagree), and SDA (strongly disagree) so that the data will be ordinal. The questionnaires were obtained and developed by elaborating the concept of intercultural learning theory (Liddicoat et al, 2013) and the concept theory of perception (Furyanto et al, 2021). They are the motivation, difficulties, and materials efficacy of intercultural learning materials of Drama subjects.

There are several steps in analyzing data. The first, questionnaire was collected from students. Second, the results of the questionnaire are tabulated. Third, the researcher analyzed the data from the questionnaire in a statistical package using Microsoft Excel to determine the highest score, lowest score, category, percentage, and frequency of questionnaires. After getting the results, the next step is to analyze and interpret the data by looking at the overall score from the highest to the lowest result.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The result views the students' perception toward the use the intercultural learning materials in teaching and learning drama subject. The interpretation of students' perception of intercultural learning material of drama subject is as follows:

Table 1. The Perception of Students' Motivation in Using the Intercultural Learning Materials

No	Statement	SA (%)	A(%)	D(%)	SD (%)
1	I feel that the use of intercultural learning material for drama subject makes my learning more interesting.	2.5	76.5	0 %	0
2	The intercultural learning material by a handout of drama makes it easier to study.	8.8	85.3	5.9	0
3	I feel that the material (handout and assignment) by the lecturer in drama class helped me to improve my learning about the topic of the lesson.	17.6	82.4	0	0
4	I think the language used in intercultural learning materials is easy to understand.	17.6	64.7	17.6	0
5	I feel that the use of intercultural learning material for drama subject makes learning more boring.	11.8	0	67.6	17.6
6	I think that the use of intercultural learning material conveyed by the lecturer makes it easier for me to understand the lesson.	20.6	79.4	0	0
7	I feel that the use of intercultural learning material is not effective for my drama learning.	0	8.8	67.6	23.5

The first important element in students' perception is motivation toward intercultural learning materials. The result shows that students feel that the use of intercultural learning material for drama subject make their learning more interesting; there are 8 students have strongly agree, and 26 students have agree. Meanwhile, no students choose to disagree or strongly disagree. Then, the second statement is that intercultural learning material in the form of a handout makes students easier to study drama; there are three students who strongly agree, 29 students have agree, 2 students who disagree and no students choose strongly disagree. On the third statement, 6 students strongly agreed and 28 students agreed, This means that students mentioned that the material both handout and assignment by the lecturer helped them to improve their learning about the topic of the lesson.

In learning drama, students agree that the language in intercultural learning material is easy to understand this is proven in the fourth statement. The next statement shows that students 6 Strongly disagree, 23 disagree, 1 agree and 4 strongly agree that using intercultural learning material make their learning more boring and not effective for drama subject. In fact, intercultural learning material delivered by the lecturer facilitates students to understand more about the topic of the lesson in drama class.

Measuring the students' motivation in utilising intercultural learning materials is crucial to promote students' achievement in this scenario. According to Filgona et al. (2020), motivation plays a crucial role in influencing students' academic performance and progress in the educational process. It will enhance the objectives of the students. The outcome also demonstrates that the majority of students possess a strong inclination towards utilising intercultural learning resources in the context of the theatrical discipline. Motivation is essential for individuals to attain their intended goals and fulfil expectations (Alcivar, 2020; Thohir, 2017).

Furthermore, the result also gives the description that intercultural learning makes students feel more interested; easy-to-understand, assignments and handouts also improve students' ability to learn drama. In this case, motivation is one of the principal indicators to show interest or desire of students in learning in the classroom. The result is also supported by previous studies; motivation is a great way to improve the student's desire to comprehend the subject of learning (Seven, 2019; Sulistiyarini & Sukardi, 2016; Thohir, 2017; Vo, 2017). Thus, it is clear that students feel motivated to learn drama with intercultural learning material in the form of handouts.

Table 2. The Students' Perception of Intercultural Learning Materials Difficulties

No	Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
1	The use of Malay and English languages in intercultural learning material helped me understand thanking expressions easily in drama class.	23.5	70.6	5.9	0
2	I mastered only a few learning materials in intercultural learning of drama class.	0	17.6 %	70.6	11.8
3	I mastered a lot of Malay and English vocabulary in intercultural learning material of drama.	0	88.2	8.8	0
4	I faced some troubles in finding the source of intercultural learning material for drama subject.	0	29	19.5	14.7
5	I think that my learning is easier because intercultural learning contains the contents that I need for my drama class.	17.6	70.6	11.8	0
6	The contents of intercultural learning materials were too much and difficult to understand.	0	11.8	79.4	8.8

The data above indicates that there was a noticeable level of difficulty encountered when using the intercultural learning tools. In addition, several students have challenges when utilising intercultural learning materials in the context of the theatrical discipline. The data presented indicates that a small number of students continue to face challenges in their learning during the sixth semester. This information can serve as an evaluative resource to improve future learning outcomes. The challenges encountered by novice learners persist as they encounter novel situations in each learning endeavour. Learning is a process undertaken by individuals or groups to acquire information in the form of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, which can lead to a positive shift in their perspective.

In intercultural learning material, students were able to use Malay and English language for learning in drama class but some students said that they only mastered a few learning materials while other students mentioned that they mastered a lot of Malay and English vocabulary in intercultural learning material of drama subject. There were students who still found difficulty in finding the source of intercultural learning materials but most of them felt that the intercultural learning handout had already created the content they needed in the drama class. the content also was not too much and difficult to understand the lesson.

In addition, the perception of the students toward intercultural learning can be seen in the difficulties of the learning material itself. In this case, the difficulty was a situation in which students were unable to study as a result of interference (Nisrawati, 2018; Yamin, 2021). In addition, learned difficulties were brought on by students who did not comprehend the subject matter like the prototype (Harziko, Said, & Darwis, 2018; Sadiqin, Santoso, & Sholahuddin, 2017). This phenomenon limited their ability to learn, which decreased their academic progress (Borghetti, Beaven, & Pugliese, 2015). Furthermore, the difficulty was when distractions prevent students from learning effectively (Erfiani, Sukarsih, Wardhana, & Lindawati, 2021; Mehdizadeh & Scott, 2005; Sintadewi, Artini, & Febryan, 2020). In short, learning activities cannot be separated from the difficulties that will be faced in every learning process (Achaeva, Daurova, Pospelova, & Borysov, 2018). Difficulties in learning are certain conditions that are characterized by obstacles in learning activities.

Table 3. The Students' Perception of Intercultural Learning Materials Efficacy

No	Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
1	I achieved the learning objectives of drama subject through the intercultural learning material.	8.8	85.3	5.9	0
2	The learning material of intercultural learning of drama subject was able to motivate me in the learning process because it was suitable for my needs.	14.7	73.5	11.8	0
3	I was able to know the objectives of the learning material that had been prepared in intercultural learning in the form of a handout.	8.8	82.4	8.8	0
4	The learning material of intercultural learning in the form of a handout related to what I need for my drama class.	5.9	94.1	0	0
5	Learning by using a handout of intercultural learning improved my understanding of learning drama.	2.9	97.4	0	0
6	I think using a handout of intercultural learning makes me feel difficult for learning drama.	0	11.8	79.4	8.8
7	I feel that the intercultural learning material does not improve my skill in learning drama.	0	14.7	58.8	26.5

The data presented above demonstrates the practical effectiveness of utilising intercultural learning tools. The findings demonstrate that students not only comprehend the utility of the content presented in handout format, but actively engage with it as a valuable learning resource that caters to their specific needs in the context of theatre class. The learning material presented in class has a tangible impact on pupils when it successfully captures their curiosity, interest, and attention, enabling them to comprehend the subject matter effectively. The material must align with the specific requirements of the students.

Here, the idea of material efficacy should be tailored to the specific requirements of the learner. [Eripuddin et al., 2023] backs it up. Students were able to accomplish the goals of the theatrical class by making use of the intercultural learning resources. According to various studies (Budiarti, n.d.; Byram, Gribkova, & Starkey, 2002; Eripuddin, Jufrizal, & Agustina, 2022a; Ilie, 2019; Paras et al., 2019), students are motivated to study when they use intercultural learning materials that are tailored to their needs. In intercultural learning materials, students might find out what the goals of the lesson are on a handout. The students also noted that the handouts from the intercultural learning course were helpful in enhancing their comprehension of both the learning process and the instruction itself. Consistent with this, Munawaroh & Syahdan (2021) acknowledge that accessible learning materials can enhance students' performance in the classroom.

4. CONCLUSION

The students' opinions of intercultural learning material in higher education are well classified, particularly in the area of drama. The outcome demonstrates that the pupils possess the inclination to utilise intercultural educational resources. Furthermore, the intercultural learning resources present a moderate level of complexity that may pose a challenge during the learning process. The intercultural learning resources has material efficacy. It implies that they must demonstrate appropriate content, organisational skills, linguistic proficiency, and the ability to apply language in different circumstances. Moreover, this study has many limitations, including the absence of preliminary research data from students and a dearth of expert theories pertaining to intercultural learning materials. This research aims to address the issue of learning materials in the field of education, specifically in the context of theatre courses. It will serve as a valuable resource for researchers conducting similar studies. This

research provides valuable insights into students' perspectives of intercultural learning materials in the field of drama. It offers readers a comprehensive understanding of how students perceive and engage with such materials.

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