

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents some general descriptions and rationales related to cultural literacy. It is related to background, problems identification, research questions, purposes, scope and significance of the study.

1.1. Background of Study

In this globalization era, human source should be literate to compete the global competition well. In a speech, Minister of Education and Culture stated that

“sejarah peradaban umat manusia menunjukkan bahwa bangsa yang besar dengan bangsa yang maju tidak hanya mengandalkan kekayaan alam yang melimpah dan jumlah penduduk yang banyak. Bangsa yang besar ditandai dengan masyarakatnya yang literat, yang memiliki peradaban tinggi, dan aktif memajukan masyarakat dunia.” This statement has a meaning that being literate could help human source to collaborate, to be critical, to be creative and communicative.

Basically, literacy is the ability to read and write. Many definitions available in the literature are context specific and some depend on who is defining literacy and for what purpose (Roberts, 2005) and the portion of literacy has become increasingly intricate. As Robert in Mmasa (2016) stated, literacy was thought as the skills of reading and writing; but today it has extended its meaning to include the capacity to read, understand and critically appreciate various forms of communication including spoken

language, printed text, broadcast media, and digital media. It has a meaning that literacy has the extend meaning not only the ability to read and write, but also it is the skill how to use the literacy components such as spoken language, printed text or etc critically. In other words, literacy is as a concept has proved to be both complex and dynamic, continuing to be interpreted and defined in a multiple ways (UNESCO, 2006).

UNESCO (2006: 149) adds that literacy could be a set of tangible skills – particularly the cognitive skills or reading and writing – that there are independent of the context in which they are acquired and the background of the person who acquires them. In UNESCO's view, someone who is literate could recognize being functional literacy. 'Functional literacy' is 'A person is functionally literate who can engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning of his group and community and also for enabling him to continue to use reading, writing and calculation for his own and the community's development' (UNESCO, 2006: 30).

Culture, however, is something which is learned, not something that someone just wakes up with one day. The elements of culture should be ideas, beliefs, values, traditions and materials (possessions) to understanding them. Spencer-Oatey in Ulum (2016) points out that culture is an obscure pile of basic inferences and values, adaptations to life, beliefs, policies, measures and behavioral conventions that are owned by a crowd of individuals, and that affect (but do not decide) each individual's

behavior and his understandings of the 'definition' of other people's behavior. To support the definition of culture literacy, Minister of Education and Culture again clearly that

“ ... bangsa dengan budaya literasi tinggi menunjukkan kemampuan bangsa tersebut berkolaborasi, berpikir kritis, kreatif, komunikatif sehingga dapat memerangi persaingan global.”

The main idea of culture literacy probably is to have an understanding and appreciation for other cultures. In addition, cultural literacy is not enough looking at the differences and similarities between cultures as well. Conducting to the notion of culture, it links with what Stigler, Gallimore and Hiebert describe about cultural literacy. Stigler, Gallimore and Hiebert (2000) described that cultural literacy involves providing teachers and students with higher level experiences of cross-cultural immersion that enhance their level of cultural understanding. They argue that cultural literacy is as the ability to understand and appreciate the similarities and differences in the customs, values, and beliefs of one's own culture and the cultures of others. Obviously, it is seen that learners must be literate in the context of culture for these terms are important standard considered at school.

Leading to literacy concept, literacy could be viewed as a social practice practice that is integrally linked with ideology, culture, knowledge, and power (Rassool, 2009; Street, 1984, 2003). In addition, seems to cover our lives and be central to modern living, as it points such that people now speak not only of "school literacy" and "vernacular literacy" but

also “cultural literacy”, “computer literacy”, and even “emotional literacy” (Steiner, 1997: 1). Thus, it can be stated that Steiner’s brings up the term of literacy into the context of cultural literacy as well. In brief, cultural literacy is one of the important issues which must be aware in this modern era.

As stated above, cultural literacy must be the crucial notion to be seen which focus to teachers and students in the school activities in Indonesia. Indeed, cultural literacy should be understood automatically. A research showed that by considering to literature and new literacy practices (Street, 1984; Heath and Street, 2008) or multiliteracies (Provenzo et al., 2011), it is argued that we can not only foster critical reading and reflection but also generate possibilities for intercultural learning (Allan, 2003; Fennes and Hapgood, 1997; Rizvi, 2009), creating spaces that allow pre-service teachers to learn about other cultures and see themselves as members of cultures too. Such interactions with literature may help teachers beware that their work as literacy educators is greatly affected by their own cultural values and knowledge. Marsh & Milliard (2000, p.11) point out that culture is a concept which refers to the norms, values, beliefs or expressive symbols of any particular group or society that is more acceptable as a starting point for analysis. The statement shows that culture is frequently about norms, values and beliefs which complete any symbols of group or society spiritually.

Concept about cultural literacy which addressed about custom, norms, spiritual and moral values, belief or expressive symbols is stated in Undang-Undang No.20 tahun 2003 tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional. Undang-Undang No.20 tahun 2003 is divided into points, that is

“Pendidikan Nasional berdasarkan Pancasila dan Undang-Undang Dasar tahun 1945 dan Pendidikan Nasional berfungsi mengembangkan kemampuan dan membentuk watak serta peradaban bangsa yang bermartabat dalam rangka mencerdaskan kehidupan bangsa”.

To support the functional of national education, in Undang-Undang No.20 tahun 2003 states that “Tujuan Pendidikan Nasional untuk mengembangkan potensi peserta didik agar menjadi manusia yang:

1.beriman dan bertaqwa kepada Tuhan Yang Maha Esa, 2. berakhlak mulia, sehat, berilmu, cakap, kreatif, mandiri, dan 3. menjadi warga yang demokratis serta bertanggung jawab”.

Obviously, spiritual and values are underlined that is characteristic and culture of Indonesia. Both of Standar Isi (SI) and Standar Kompetensi Lulusan (SKL) in Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan Nasional No.22 tahun 2006 and Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan Nasional No.24 tahun 2006 states that

“satuan pendidikan dasar dan menengah diharapkan dapat mengembangkan Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP) sesuai dengan satuan pendidikan, potensi daerah, sosial budaya masyarakat setempat, dan peserta didik”.

To support in developing “standar isi”, KTSP should be based on some principles, that they are:

a. berpusat pada potensi, perkembangan, kebutuhan, dan kepentingan peserta didik dan lingkungannya; b. beragam dan terpadu; c. tanggap terhadap ilmu pengetahuan, teknologi, dan seni; d. relevan dengan kebutuhan kehidupan; e. menyeluruh dan berkesinambungan; f. belajar sepanjang hayat; dan g. seimbang antara kepentingan nasional dan daerah”.

What have been stated in Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan Nasional No.22 tahun 2006 and Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan Nasional No.24 tahun 2006 can be linked to idea of Hirsch (1987) which assumes that cultural literacy is the shared knowledge that enables educated persons to take up any general text and read it with an adequate level of comprehension and to grasp the central message, as well as the unstated implications of the underlying context that give full meaning to what is read. The definition is appropriate with the assertion of curriculum integration project that is applied in Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP) in relation to enhancing the individual's understanding of his or her own culture by providing cross-cultural experiences and opportunities. In KTSP, students are expected to appreciate other religions, culture, tribes, and society well. Thus, cultural literacy that has been covered extends from one's understanding of personal culture to understanding other cultures.

Yet, the existence and issues about cultural literacy cannot be denied nowadays. Scholars are dealt that the changing primary school movement has influenced instructional values concerning the importance of cultural literacy. The condition in doing cultural literacy in Indonesia is becoming anxious. Kurniati Syamsu (2017) tried to describe the implementation of school literacy in primary school. She discovered that the first stage of the GLS (habituation) conducted by primary schools has run well by paying attention to the activities set by Kemendikbud described

in ten indicators of GLS success. Peykani & Rad (2016) has observed the Literacy Globalization and the Demand for Cultural Change Policy. They concluded that such countries a new study of literacy and policies related to the phenomenon and as new and more flexible motion control with forward, futures, taking into account cultural differences in order to preserve the internal coherence of external adaptation to global change and land use policy. They also observed that Aboriginal models with two simultaneous effect, use of modern means of education, awareness and education campaigns using media literacy and multicultural groups affected by basic assumptions and participation of all communities in accordance with their group culture toward cultural synergies and obtain sustainable development on the one hand and to prevent cultural invasion drove the phenomenon of the outer structure and non-Aboriginal literacy, land secured, has finally achieved the promise of democracy in society.

In the other effort, Katherine, Richardson and Bruna (2009) has observed the Cultural Dialogue of English Learner Literacy. They found that perspective of institutionalized literacy beliefs and practices at their own sites can construct teacher thinkers and challengers who actively encounter, question, and reconstruct the cultural dialogue of English Learner literacy. This study basically emphasizes the teachers' main role in building literacy through teachers and students' dialogue. Then, Ulum (2016) observed whether teach culture or not when we teach English as a Foreign Language has been great concern for a long time in Syrian

context. Differently with Syahbana and Pratama (2017) that have observed National Character and Cultural Education on Course Book which was focused on reading for Senior High School. Based on the result, they found that the values of national character and cultural education is problem solving from the government especially Ministry of Education and Culture to decrease the problem of culture and character in our country.

Overall, the results of the researches above attempt to search for literacy development in educational context. In fact, there is a gap in conducting this study among the researches above. Basically, this study tries to investigate what values or concept of culture that applied by the schools to the students. This study is conducted by investigating primary school documents to describe whether culture literacy are listed or not in syllabus, lesson plans, textbooks, learning assessment. This study's purpose is not only pressed to the lack of ability of writing and reading but also search for lackness of being culturally literate that see the cultural literacy there. All the results above, mostly shows the effort in research of is pointed out the investigating of culture literacy aspects in primary school documents.

Relating to the statement, standard competency of English subject in Primary School (SD) should be concerned as "local content" subject. The purpose of learning English subject in primary school is to develop the language accompanying action. In other word, learning English subject in primary school is only to develop discourse. In discourse of primary

school's level, it is called by performative literacy in which students are expected to read, write, to listen and to speak by using the symbols in English.

Through GLN that stated by Indonesian Minister of Education and Culture clearly confirms the compatible solution to this issue,

“Pintu masuk untuk mengembangkan budaya literasi bangsa adalah melalui penyediaan bahan bacaan dan peningkatan minat baca anak. Sebagai bagian penting dari penumbuhan budi pekerti, minat baca anak perlu dipupuk sejak usia dini mulai dari lingkungan keluarga. Minat baca yang tinggi didukung dengan ketersediaan bahan bacaan yang bermutu dan terjangkau, akan mendorong pembiasaan membaca dan menulis baik disekolah maupun dimasyarakat”.

It is clearly stated that through GLN students will encourage their ability in cultural literacy. Otherwise, reading and writing habituation is the basic to build their cultural literacy. Family should be the first to engage the guidance of GLN as Minister stated. Engaging family support, children will more motivate in building their culture literacy and more enjoyable.

The single most important solution to the issue of teaching cultural literacy is the manner where material is presented to students. Yet, educators have proven that the typical student will forget the majority of information presented because he/she was not an active participant in the process.

Obviously, in order to fulfill the niche of previous research results, this study tries to investigate the implementation of cultural literacy in school documents of primary schools in the fourth, fifth and sixth grades.

This study will employ the concept of cultural literacy implemented in primary school. Hence, it is been considered as an urgent issue that needs to be investigated amongst others.

1.2. Research Questions

Relating to the background of the study, the problem of this study are formulated as stated below.

1. How is the cultural literacy addressed in syllabus of English subject at primary school?
2. How is the cultural literacy addressed in lesson plan of English subject at primary school?
3. How is the cultural literacy addressed in learning materials of English subject at primary school?
4. How is the cultural literacy realized in assessment of English subject at primary school?
5. How is consistency of cultural literacy prescribed across academic documents of English Language Instruction at primary school?

1.3. Purposes of Study

The objectives of the study are:

1. To investigate the cultural literacy which is addressed in syllabus of English subject of English Language Instruction at primary school
2. To investigate the cultural literacy which is addressed in lesson plan of English subject at primary school

3. To investigate the cultural literacy which is addressed in learning materials of English subject at primary school
4. To investigate the cultural literacy which is addressed in learning assessment of English subject at primary school
5. To investigate whether the consistency of cultural literacy is prescribed across academic documents of English Language Instruction at primary school

1.4. Scope of Study

The qualities in character of education in Indonesia are identified by main domains that cover honesty, ethics, cultural literacy and altruism in fact. This study focuses on the cultural literacy domain which investigates how cultural literacy concept is built in the academic documents to strengthen learners' qualities in being honest and having moral principles and moral uprightness in the basic of character of education. This investigation will be pointed out in the perspective of English learning.

Academic documents that must be analyzed in this study are syllabus, lesson plans, learning material and learning assessments. The syllabus and lesson plan consist of odd semester and even semester collected from grade IV, V and VI. In this study, learning material is focused on textbooks which are used by students during learning activities at classroom. Then, the learning assessment is on mid semester and final semester examination from each grade. The documents will be collected

from SDN 101864 Gunung Rintih, Kab. Deli Serdang. SDN 101864 is qualified good (B) from education department in Kab. Deli Serdang. The accreditation of SDN 101864 Gunung Rintih is 78. Otherwise, SDN 101864 Gunung Rintih, Kab. Deli Serdang has implemented cultural literacy by the signs and pictures of national identity related to Ministry of Education and Culture. The documents then will be identified, categorized and described to get how cultural literacy is applied there. This analysis is based only in the perspective of English learning.

1.5. Significances of Study

This research is expected to be useful for understanding of building cultural literacy in the process of English learning both in theory and practice. This study, theoretically, provides deeper insight more literature of government, school, and teachers' efforts in building value, particularly in building cultural literacy in formal education in perspective of English learning. While, practicality, this study can be beneficial for providing scientific literature for contributing the view of cultural literacy both in English learning perspective and other subjects correlated to cultural literacy.

1.6. The Clarification of Key Terms

To avoid misconception, the terms discussed in this study need to be clarified. The main terms in this study are cultural literacy and primary school documents. This study used cultural literacy's theories of Segal

(2015), Naqeeb (2015), Ochea (2017), and Suyitno (2017). Segal (2015) argues that cultural literacy is about an attitudes to the social and phenomenon that shape fill the experiences - bodies of knowledge, fields of social action, individuals or groups, and of course cultural artefacts, including texts in daily activities which views them as being essentially readable and it is also as a way of looking at social and cultural issues through the lens of literary thinking (Segal and Koleva, 2009).

Rokhmawan (2017, p. 231) described culture is carried out by doing routine activities as habituation, monitoring its development, evaluating, and developing various activities of local oral story literacy (upgrading activity) or it is defined by habit. The habituation could be from dress and appearance and eating habit of festivals. This perception obviously depicts that routine activities as habituation becomes the way learners could express their culture out.

Another perception about culture literacy is taken from Ochoea, Mcdonald, & Monk, 2017, p. 547) counter that cultural literacy can be stated as the ability to read and interpret culture in many manifestations – cultural artefacts - by applying skills and knowledge inherent the possibility to modify such an artefacts and attitudes and give the benefits to everyone involved in given situation. In the words of Naqeeb, 2012), ‘cultural literacy’ is defined as the abilities in understanding, figure out, and implementing the similarities and also the ability to understand the history and concepts underlying a culture (Naqeeb, 2012; Segal, 2015). Suyitno

(2017, p.43), moreover, cultural literacy is heredity civilization that cannot be separated from science and it is also a process thinking, influenced by beliefs, rules, communication, self-protection, work, art and the results of human work, creativity, and sense.

On the whole, the concept of cultural literacy for this study was separated into some aspects, such as dress and appearance, food and eating habit, time and time consciousness – those are three are linked with Suyitno's definition of cultural literacy which is the ability to understanding and interpreting the culture embodied in behavior, thought, and works; Suyitno (2017), habit linked with Rokhmawan (2017), attitude linked with Ochoa et. al. (2017); communication from Segal (2015), value from Naqeeb (2012);

Regarding to these terms, it is obviously can be emphasized that this study would bring the term of cultural literacy into the concept of learners' ability in being literate to learn about culture that must be taught in the classroom and adapting it in the school documents such as syllabus/curriculum, lesson plan, textbook and learning assessment.