

CHAPTER 24: INCORPORATING JAVANESE CULTURAL HERITAGES INTO A LEARNING DISCOURSE IN ELT

Elysa Hartati

(Universitas Mercu Buana Yogyakarta)

elysa@mercubuana-yogya.ac.id

A. Introduction

In the context of English Language Teaching (ELT), culturally contextualized content is considered to be a way to integrate a local culture as a discourse within teaching and learning materials. This way promotes the local wisdom rooted in the life learning context while English as the medium of instruction fosters the intercultural communicative competence in the global context. Several studies have shown that by doing so, this strategy can preserve the local culture, promote the students' cultural awareness, and enhance the students' intercultural literacy (Hasnah et al., 2024; Hersulastuti et al., 2019; Miqawati et al., 2024; Novita et al., 2020). By the use of related vocabularies that are closed to the students' local context, it made them easier to understand the English materials (Wulandari & Widiastuty, 2024). Thus, it can achieve

impact, help learners develop confidently, provide relevant content, expose learners to authentic use of language, provide opportunities for authentic language use, take into account individual differences, encourage learners' involvement, and improve reading literacy (Oktarina et al., 2022; Rifa'i, 2019).

The integration of local cultural content in the ELT has raised a cultural language learning approach (CLLA) that believes any community's cultural products can serve as media for language learning in the form of discourses (Hermayawati & Zakiyah, 2024). This learning approach can be contextualized in any setting of a country's cultural products, including Indonesia as a multicultural country. In the context of Javanese culture in Indonesia, there are lots of cultural products that contain local wisdom worth to be integrated in the learning discourse, such as the local houses, traditional costumes, traditional food and beverages, cultural ceremonies, cultural dance, and other cultural heritages. This chapter will present how the Javanese cultural heritages are incorporated into the discourse in English language teaching and learning.

B. Teaching Design

This section will give you an example of using Joglo local house as a descriptive text provided to teach reading-viewing skills. Incorporating CLLA can be done through the discourse creation, which is creating the English text based on local content as the teaching and learning materials.

Meanwhile, the stages used to conduct the class implements Genre-based Approach (GBA) which allows the students to develop the wider genre awareness, that is important to understand and produce a text in a various contexts (Hakim, 2023). This also can help the students develop their ability to analyze and criticize a genre-based text. Here is the example of teaching design with the genre of Descriptive Text.



Figure 1. Joglo
Joglo Traditional House

Joglo is a traditional house of Javanese society consisting of 2 main sections namely *Pendapa* and *Ndalem*. *Pendapa* is the front part that has a large room without barriers, typically used to receive guests or a playroom where children and family enjoying their leisure time. While *Ndalem* is part of rooms such as bedroom, living room and

other spaces that have more privacy. The characteristic of the Joglo building is on the roof towering like a mountain.

Joglo houses are mostly owned by those who have high social status because the buildings need more expensive materials than other forms of houses. The Javanese society used to think that Joglo should not be owned by ordinary people but only allowed for the nobles, kings, and princes who are honorable and respectable. But today Joglo house is also used by all levels of society and also for various other functions, such as conference hall and offices. Basically, Joglo shapes like a rectangle, with four main pillars in the middle and used *blandar* compound which is called intercropping. This rectangular shape in its development changes with the additions of space on the side of the building but remains a unitary form of a rectangular floor plan.

Adapted from <https://housekotagede.com/joglo-traditional-house-in-java>

To teach the descriptive text with the focus on reading and viewing skills, the activities can be done with the stages as follows.

a. Pre-Activities

1. The students are prepared mentally and physically: greeting, praying, friendly interaction, and checking attendance.

2. The teacher asks questions that connect to prior knowledge, such as self-identity, adjectives, and leading to the topic being discussed
3. The teacher introduces to the topic will be discussed.
4. The teacher presents the learning objectives.

b. While-Activities

1. BKOF (*Building Knowledge of the Field*)

- a) Teacher shows a picture of Joglo house to the students.
- b) Teacher lets the students view and observe the picture.
- c) Teacher brainstorm with the students, where the Joglo house originally comes from.
- d) Teacher and students identify the details of Joglo from the picture.
- e) Teacher and students interpret the meaning of the building related to the Javanese local wisdom.

2. MOT (*Modelling of the Text*)

- a) Teacher provides a descriptive text to the students.
- b) The students read the text and identify the unfamiliar words they find.
- c) The teacher and students find out the meaning of the words.
- d) The teacher and students identify the generic structure and language features of the text.

3. *JCOT (Joint Construction of the Text)*

- a) The teacher presents some pictures of Javanese houses, such as Limasan, Tajug, Panggang Pe and the descriptive text of each.
- b) The students work in group of 3-5 (depending on the number of the students in class) identify the pictures and read the text.
- c) The teacher gives an exercise related to the reading comprehension, such as finding the main ideas, cultural context's vocabularies, and language features of the text.
- d) The students brainstorm in group and answer the exercises.
- e) The teacher then checks the students' answers and discuss them in the class.

4. *ICOT (Independent Construction of the Text)*

- a) The teacher has prepared a quiz wrapped in the digital platform through Wordwall. The quiz contains the materials they have learnt previously related to the descriptive text of Javanese houses.
- b) The students do the quiz independently as the assessment of learning.
- c) The students gain the result of the quiz.

c. **Post-Activities**

1. The students reflect on the learning process; how they feel on the lesson they learnt, how proud they are with the local culture.

2. The students receive feedback from the teacher on their learning progress and outcomes.
3. The students are informed about what they will learn next.
4. The teacher closes the class.

C. Further Discussion

The implementation of the integration of local culture into ELT is not limited only by using one learning model. The more varied the model used, the more chances to explore the local content into ELT. This also can be implemented into other integrated skills such as listening-speaking, reading-writing, writing-presenting with other genres to be exposed such as recount, narrative, procedure, report, etc (Hasbi et al., 2025). The discourse on *mitoni* ceremony (the prenatal blessing ceremony on the 7th month pregnancy in Javanese tradition), for example, it can be used to teach recount text with the series of events deployed. The students can be prompted to write and present it in English using blog. The use of technology also can make this strategy attract the students' interest and engagement in the class (Hasbi et al., 2024; Madkur et al., 2021). The students can view a picture or video to make it more alive, create a text and afterwards present it with the help of technology to stir the sense of pride of the local culture.

While the integration of local culture into ELT pedagogically sounds great, it may face practical barriers, especially the teacher preparedness as the agents of

cultural promotion to their students with its cultural complexity and also the lack of local content-based teaching materials (Kaltsum et al., 2021; Munandar & Newton, 2021; Parlindungan et al., 2018). The teachers, however, can also vary the learning discourse with the foreign culture sometimes to open the student's global insight by putting their critical thought through comparing and contrasting between local and Western culture, for instance (Hasbi, 2025). Teaching English as a foreign language in Indonesia without leaving the students' local culture and identity is a must to preserve our local culture. One of the ways is by promoting it to the younger generations into the classroom. Thus, they can appreciate their own local culture and promote it to the global in the future.

Author

Elysa Hartati, S.Pd., M.Pd. currently works as a lecturer of English Language Education Study Program in Universitas Mercu Buana Yogyakarta. Her research interests focus on Systemic Functional Linguistics, Translation Studies, and English Language Teaching. Further discussion on relevant topics could be reached by her email: elysa@mercubuana-yogya.ac.id.

References

- Hakim, A. (2023). Genre-related episodes as a lens on students' emerging genre knowledge: Implications for genre-based writing pedagogy, collaborative tasks, and learning materials. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 60. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2023.101001>
- Hasbi, M., Alamsyah, A., Faozan, A., Astawa, N. L. P. N. S. P., Fauzi, A. R. (2024). *Useful AI Tools For English Teachers*. Rizquna. <http://e-repository.perpus.iainsalatiga.ac.id/21414>
- Hasbi, M., Perdana, M. T., Madkur, A., Sari, E. D. P., Nor, H. (2025). *Powerful Vocabulary and Grammar Classroom Activities*. Rizquna. <http://e-repository.perpus.iainsalatiga.ac.id/23749/>
- Hasbi, M. (2025). Vocabulary and grammar learning activities inspired by Squid Game TV series. In *Powerful Vocabulary and Grammar Classroom Activities* (pp. 1-13). Rizquna. <http://e-repository.perpus.uinsalatiga.ac.id/23502/>
- Hasnah, Y., Ginting, P., Saragih, M., Kharisma, A. J., & Sari, P. L. P. (2024). A probe into local cultural values in locally produced EFL textbooks in Indonesia. *Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences Studies*, 24(3), 648-661. <https://doi.org/10.69598/hasss.24.3.268564>

- Hermayawati, & Zakiyah, F. (2024). Fostering teachers' growth mindset to face education challenges using a cultural language learning approach (CLLA). *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 23(3), 504-526. <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.23.3.25>
- Hersulastuti, Setiyadi, D. B. P., Mulyadi, D., Asmara, R., & Ratna Kusumaningrum, W. (2019). Utilizing digital media for embedding local cultural values: vocational high schools context. *Journal of Physics: Conference Series*, 1339(1). <https://doi.org/10.1088/1742-6596/1339/1/012113>
- Kaltsum, H. U., Habiby, W. N., & Razali, A. B. (2021). Visual analysis of local content in English elementary textbook in Surakarta Indonesia: a focus on cultural local content. *Asian Journal of University Education*, 17(4), 378-387. <https://doi.org/10.24191/ajue.v17i4.16203>
- Madkur, A., Farih, A., Rojab, A. R., Linarsih, A., Hamdani, B. (2021). *Reflections on Pedagogical Practices during COVID-19 Pandemic*. Pena Persada.
- Miqawati, A. H., Wijayanti, F., & Purnamasari, A. I. (2024). Integrating local culture in English language teaching : enhancing authentic materials and cultural awareness. *Journal of English in Academic and Professional Communication JEAPCO*, 10(2). <https://doi.org/10.25047/jeapco.v10i2.5096> 10(2), 100-106.

- Munandar, M. I., & Newton, J. (2021). Indonesian EFL teachers' pedagogic beliefs and classroom practices regarding culture and interculturality. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 21(2), 158-173. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2020.1867155>
- Novita, D., Purwati, O., Anam, S., & Setiawan, S. (2020). Using local contents in English materials: a manifestation of maintaining local wisdom in English language teaching. *Asian EFL Journal*, 27(44), 40-62. <https://www.scopus.com/inward/record.uri?eid=2-s2.0-85096078574&partnerID=40&md5=e56dbb06ffbbe766cd99f31c7a6ca4a8>
- Oktarina, Y., Inderawati, R., & Petrus, I. (2022). Developing local culture-based EFL reading materials for the 21st-century learning. *Studies in English Language and Education*, 9(3), 1128-1147. <https://doi.org/10.24815/siele.v9i3.24660>
- Parlindungan, F., Rifai, I., & Safriani, A. (2018). The representation of Indonesian cultural diversity in middle school English textbooks. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 8(2), 289-302. <https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v8i2.13276>
- Rifa'i, A. M. (2019). Integrating local wisdom in language teaching. *Al-Mabsut: Jurnal Studi Islam dan Sosial*, 13(1), 15-25.

Wulandari, W., & Widiastuty, H. (2024). The influence of local culture on English language learning : perspectives on students from difference cultural backgrounds. *International Proceedings Universitas Tulungagung*, 210-217.