



Students' Perception of Cultural Literacy Development in Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study investigated the EFL students' perceptions of cultural literacy development in higher education. **Method:** The research design was an ethnographic study. The study was conducted in two private and state universities in Indonesia. The subjects were students from the English education department at two universities. The researcher chose four students from each university as research subjects who know and understand more about cultural literacy development. The technique for analyzing data in the ethnographic study was descriptive labels, selecting, identifying, generalizing, and noting. **Result:** This study's findings showed that in higher education, two students have a high perception, one has a moderate, and the last one has a low perception of cultural literacy development in the academic context. Each student's category generally has a different impact on the development of their cultural literacy in the academic context. **Novelty:** This study produces the Makugawene (harmonic) Cultural Literacy model to develop EFL students' cultural literacy in higher education.

INTRODUCTION

Cultural literacy is understanding and participating fluently in a given culture. Therefore, cultural literacy requires proper literacy- writing and reading letters (Shliakhovchuk, 2021). Cultural literacy can be defined as follows: "the capacity to comprehend and analyze culture in all of its forms (cultural artifacts) through the application of the abilities and knowledge inherent in literary and cultural studies, providing the opportunity to change one's perspective on or attitude toward these artifacts.". It should be highlighted that the concept of "culture" used in this method is rather broad; it covers academic fields and the practices linked with them in addition to particular customs that may be connected to an individual's ethnic-geographic heritage.

Literacy refers to the ability of people to read and write. Reading and writing are about encoding and decoding information between written symbols and sound (Nelisa et al., 2020). The capacity to utilize and comprehend written words or other symbols for communication is known as literacy. They learn to read and write early in pregnancy. When newborns read to, they might acquire a love of reading and learn the rhythms and sounds of their native tongue while still in the womb. Literacy is defined as the ability to read and write well. It also involves using critical thinking skills to evaluate information from print, visual, digital, and auditory sources (Xie & Liu, 2024). Those with literacy skills are also expected to be able to adopt a positive outlook. The definition of literacy is comprehensive and multifaceted, encompassing basic, financial, digital, scientific, and religious knowledge.

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