

CULTURE AND SILENCE IN EFL UNIVERSITY CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT

So far, studies about silence in EFL classrooms show that there is a correlation between students' silence and their culture (among others King, 2011; Nakane, 2016; Wilang, 2017). Focusing on whether there is a relation between EFL students' cultural identity and silence in the classroom, this study looks at the relation between culture and silence from a different perspective. Forty-nine first-semester EFL students of Bogor Agricultural University who took part in this study were asked to fill out a questionnaire about (1) how they identified themselves – whether they tend to be western or eastern in their attitudes – and (2) why they tend to be silent in the EFL classrooms. Using Hofstede's (1970) cultural dimensions and Brown & Levinson's (1987) Management of Face Theory, we found that although 86% of the participants identified themselves as being more western, those who responded to their lecturers' questions by silence are more motivated by eastern values. Although students' silence was indeed related with face wants, this study shows that culture is not a factor which causes the students' silence in the classroom.

Keywords: *silence, culture, face wants*

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