

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING IN ELT WRITING INSTRUCTION: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) has received growing attention in English Language Teaching (ELT) because of its potential to create learning environments that are more inclusive, meaningful, and connected to students' lived experiences. In the context of writing instruction, CRT plays an important role since writing activities are closely tied to learners' cultural backgrounds, identities, and personal experiences. Despite the increasing interest in CRT, previous studies have largely focused on its general implementation in education, while research specifically review previous studies on the implementation of culturally responsive teaching in ELT writing classrooms.

This study employed a qualitative Systematic Literature Review (SLR) design. The data consisted of peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2020 and 2025, collected from academic database such as Google Scholar, ERIC, ScienceDirect, and Scopus. The selected studies were analyzed through thematic analysis to identify major themes, patterns, and current research trends related to CRT in writing instruction.

The findings reveal that CRT positively contributes to students' writing development by enhancing engagement, motivation, confidence, creativity, and opportunity for self-expression. The reviewed studies also show that teachers commonly apply CRT through the use of culturally relevant topics, multicultural reading materials, and collaborative writing activities. However, several challenges remain, particularly related to limited teacher preparation and the lack of culturally relevant instructional materials.

Overall, the findings suggest that CRT has strong potential to support more inclusive and meaningful writing instruction in ELT context. This study not only provides pedagogical insights for English teachers but also recommendation for future research on culturally responsive writing practices.

Key words: Culturally Responsive Teaching, ELT Writing Instruction, English Language Teaching, Systematic Literature Review.

Introduction

Writing is widely regarded as one of the most challenging skills in English Language Teaching (ELT) because it requires learners to develop ideas, organize arguments logically, apply appropriate grammatical structures, and convey meaning effectively (Li et al., 2024). In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, students often struggle to improve their writing ability due to limited linguistic competence, low confidence, and insufficient opportunities to relate classroom learning to their personal and sociocultural experiences (Kormos, 2023). At the same time, the growing cultural diversity within modern classrooms has encouraged educators to adopt more

inclusive and meaningful teaching practices that value students' identities and lived experiences (Han et al., 2021). As a result, language learning is no longer viewed solely as the acquisition of linguistic knowledge, but also as a socially and culturally situated process that should respond to learners' diverse backgrounds and perspectives (Zhai & Razali, 2023).

To address these challenges, educators have increasingly highlighted the importance of culturally inclusive teaching approaches, particularly Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT), Gay (2018) defines CRT as an approach that utilizes students' cultural knowledge, prior

experiences, and learning styles to make the learning process

more meaningful and effective. In a similar vein, Ladson-Billings (1995) explains that culturally relevant pedagogy supports students not only academically, but also socially, emotionally, and politically by incorporating their cultural identities into classroom learning. Hammond (2015) further argues that culturally responsive teaching helps students connect new knowledge to their own cultural experiences, thereby strengthening engagement and supporting cognitive growth.

In the context of English Language Teaching (ELT), CRT plays a particularly important role because language learning is closely tied to identity, communication, and cultural representation (Fatmawaty et al., 2024). When students' cultural backgrounds are integrated into classroom activities, learning becomes more inclusive and personally meaningful interaction, and increase students' motivation throughout the language process (F. Siregar et al., 2023).

Recent Systematic reviews further reveal that culturally responsive instruction can strengthen students' cultural awareness while fostering more inclusive classroom environments (Alamsyah et al., 2025; Rofiqi et al., 2025). Moreover, the integration of local culture and culturally relevant materials into ELT has been found to increase learners' motivation and improve language learning outcomes, especially in contexts where English is taught as a foreign language (Heriyanto et al., 2025). Taken together, these findings indicate that CRT holds considerable pedagogical potential for enhancing language learning process in multicultural classroom.

Despite the increasing number of studies on culturally responsive pedagogy, several important gaps can still be identified in the existing literature. Most of previous research such as, Aronson and Laughter (2016) have primarily focused on the theoretical aspects of cultural education, while studies by Agirdag et al. (2016) and

Abacioglu et al. (2019) mainly discussed about multicultural education. In addition, studies conducted by Munandar and Newton (2021), McAllister and Irvine (2002), Mamad and Vigh (2024), and Lambeth and Smith (2016), explored teacher' and students' perception on cultural content in learning process. rather than specifically examining writing instruction within ELT contexts. Furthermore, many studies discuss Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) in broad terms without clearly explaining how culturally responsive practices are applied in writing classroom. For example, studies by Alim et al. (2020), Cruz et al. (2020), Appel (2023), Widyaishwara et al. (2026), Harriott and Martin (2004), Lim et al. (2019) mainly focused on the implementation of CRT in general classroom practices.

Another limitation is that findings related to CRT in writing instruction remain scattered across different educational contexts, making it difficult to identify consistent patterns and practical pedagogical implications. Although recent studies, such as Suwarti et al. (2025), have explored CRT in broader EFL settings, systematic discussions focusing specifically on culturally responsive writing instruction are still limited, as highlighted by Istiadi and Yulianti (2025). Therefore, a more focused synthesis of a recent studies is needed to provide a clearer and more comprehensive understanding of the role of CRT in ELT writing pedagogy.

Considering this gaps, this study aims to systematically review previous research on CRT in ELT writing instruction. More specifically, the review seeks to identify how CRT is implemented in writing classrooms, examine its impact on students' writing development, explore the challenges faced during its implementation, and identify current research trends and gaps in the literature. The novelty of this study lies in its specific focus on writing instruction within ELT

contexts as previous review studies have generally discussed CRT from a broader educational perspective. Practically, the findings may provide useful insights for improving inclusive and meaningful writing instruction in EFL classrooms. In

Methodology

This study uses the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) design to examine previous research on Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) in ELT writing instruction. The SLR approach allows researchers to identify, evaluate, and synthesize relevant studies systematically and transparently (Kitchenham et al., 2009). Furthermore, Snyder (2019) explains that literature review studies help researchers identifying research trends, theoretical developments, and gaps within existing studies. Based on these perspective, the present study aims to develop a comprehensive understanding of how CRT is implemented in ELT writing classrooms, its impact on students' writing skill, and the challenges encountered during its implementation.

The data in this study consisted of peer-reviewed journal articles collected from several academic database, including Google Scholar, ERIC, ScienceDirect, Scopus, Edulite, and TEFLIN. The literature search was conducted using several keywords, such as "culturally responsive teaching", "CRT in ELT", "writing skill", and "EFL writing". To ensure the relevance and quality of selected studies, several inclusion criteria were applied, such as article published between 2020 and 2025, peer reviewed journal articles, studies related to CRT in

addition, this study may serve as a valuable for English teachers, curriculum developers, and future researcher who are interested in integrating culturally responsive practices into ELT writing pedagogy.

ELT contexts, and studies specifically focusing on writing instruction. On the other hand, studies that were considered irrelevant to research focus, including conference proceeding, theses, dissertations, and duplicate articles, were excluded from the review process. The selection of articles followed the systematic review stages proposed by Kitchenham and Charters (2007), which include identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion. This process was conducted to ensure that the selected studies were relevant, reliable and aligned with objectives of the review.

The selected articles were analyzed using thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) explain that thematic analysis is a method used to identify, analyze and interpret recurring patterns or themes within qualitative data. In this study, the analysis focused on several major themes related to CRT in ELT writing instruction, including the implementation of CRT in writing classrooms, its impact on students' writing development, teaching strategies employed by teachers, and the challenges encountered during the implementation process. Though this approach, the study aimed to provide a more organized and comprehensive understanding of the findings reported across previous studies.

Finding and Discussion

The selected publication ranged from journals indexed in SINTA 4 to internationally recognized Scopus journals categorized as Q1. Presented in Table 1. The findings generally indicate that Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)

contributes positively to the learning process through the integration of cultural elements into classroom instruction. This approach not only enhances students' learning outcomes but also promotes a more inclusive and meaningful educational environment. Furthermore, the methods and findings of the reviewed studies are

summarized in Table 2. There are 20 sources, consisting of journal articles

Table 1. Index Journal Publication

Year	Journal Title	Type
2023	Issues in Educational Research	Scopus Q2
2024	Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran (Undiksha)	SINTA 2
2022	Studies in English Language and Education	Scopus Q1
2023	AERA Open	Scopus Q1
2023	International Journal of Instruction	Scopus Q2
2024	ELT Forum: Journal of English Language Teaching	SINTA 2
2024	English Review: Journal of English Education	SINTA 2
2023	Elite Journal	SINTA 3
2025	Education Science	Scopus Q1
2021	The Educational Forum	Scopus Q1
2023	Pubmedia Jurnal Pendidikan bahasa Inggris	SINTA 4
2024	Harvard Educational Review	Scopus Q1
2024	Multidisciplinary Reviews	Scopus Q4
2024	Profile: Issue in Teachers' Professional Development	Scopus Q2
2021	Language and Intercultural Communication	Scopus Q1
2022	Journal of Innovation in Educational and Cultural Research	SINTA 2
2024	Pegem Journal of Education and Instruction	Scopus Q2
2024	Edukatif: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan	SINTA 2
2020	Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics	Scopus Q2
2025	EduLite: Journal of English Education, Literature and Culture	SINTA 2

Table 2. Author, Method, Finding

Author	Method	Findings
Siregar, L.K., Mahyuni, I., & Rahmawati, Y. (2023)	Research and Development	Developed a culturally responsive English teaching model for primary school EFL teachers in Indonesia; the model integrates local cultural content, teacher reflective practices, and contextualized instructional strategies to enhance student engagement and cultural identity.
Alamsyah, T.P., Faturrohman, M., & Rosmilawati, I. (2024)	Systematic Literature Review (SLR)	CRT improves student engagement and learning outcomes. Effective implementation requires teacher training and curriculum adaptation.
Ariawan, D., Nurkamto, J., & Sumardi, S. (2022)	Critical discourse analysis	Indonesian EFL national commercial textbook lack

Comstock, M., Like, E., Hill, K.L. & Desmimone, L.M. (2023)	Quantitative (teacher survey)	balanced cultural representation. Western cultures dominate over local and other international cultures. Professional learning significantly influences teachers' beliefs and self-efficacy for CRT. These beliefs positively relate to CRT classroom practices.
Ftriani, S., Syafei, A.F.R, & Hasanah, U. (2023)	Mixed methods (survey and interviews)	Key factors influencing CRT development in Indonesian higher education include teacher belief, institutional support, curriculum flexibility, and cultural awareness training.
Hidayati A.F., Yuliati, Y., & Hutagalung, F.D. (2024)	Qualitative (case study)	Implementation of CRT within Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum faces challenges such as lack of teacher training and resources, but shows potential for fostering inclusive learning environment.
Jaya, H.P., Sofendi, & Mirizon, S. (2024)	Qualitative (preservice teacher perspective)	Indonesian preservice teachers positively view integration of local wisdom in English courses; they believe it enhances cultural identity and student engagement.
Jayanti, L.N., & Ali Mustofa (2023)	Content Analysis	Indonesian interactive English textbook for Merdeka Curriculum includes limited cultural content; local culture is underrepresented compared to target cultures.
Kyza, E., & Georgiou, Y. (2025)	Curriculum analysis	Curriculum redesign that integrates equity and active citizenship in science education increases student motivation, critical thinking, and sense of social responsibility.
Ladson-Billings, G. (2021)	Theoretical/ Reflective essay	Review three decades of culturally relevant, responsive, and sustaining pedagogies calls for moving

Yuliantari, S. & Huda, T. (2023)	Systematic Literature Review	beyond theory to actionable practice and policy change. Integration of CRT in English learning improves student participation, cultural awareness, and language acquisition; recommends teacher professional development.
Ladson-Billings, G., Paris, D., Alim, H.S, & Nasir, N.S. (2024)	Theoretical/Collaborative essay	Traces evolution of culturally sustaining pedagogies; offers invitation for teachers, researchers, and communities to sustain pluralistic cultural practices in education.
Liu, W., Jamaludin, K.A., hamzah, M.I. (2024)	Systematic Literature Review	CRT principles (cultural awareness, inclusive curriculum, asset-based instruction) are transferable to technical communication education; recommends curriculum reform.
Mamad, A., & Vigh, T. (2024)	Mixed methods	EFL/ESL teachers and students have differing perceptions of written feedback; students prefer detailed, constructive feedback while teachers focus on error correction.
Munandar, M.I., & Newton, J.(2021)	Qualitative (interviews and classroom observation)	Indonesian EFL teachers hold positive beliefs about integrating culture but face constraints including exam pressure, lack of resources, and limited intercultural training.
Nurbatra, L., & Masyhud, M. (2022)	Qualitative (interviews and document analysis)	Infusing CRT in higher education supports multicultural education in Indonesia; require curriculum redesign, lecturer training, and institutional commitment.
Puspita Ratri, D., Widiati, U., Astutik, I., & Magdalena Jonathan, P. (2024)	Systematic Literature Review	Integration of local culture into English language teaching in Southeast Asia positively affects learners' attitudes and engagement; however, implementation remains inconsistent across contexts.

Rima, R., Muhyidin, A., Leksono, S.M., & Jamaludin, U. (2024)	Qualitative (survey and interviews)	Teacher in Banten Province perceive CRT positively but face challenges including lack of training, resources, and time; opportunities include curriculum flexibility and local wisdom integration.
Setyowati, I. (2020)	Qualitative (case study)	Multicultural education in Indonesian EFL classrooms faces challenges such as teacher unpreparedness, limited materials, and exam -oriented culture; opportunities include fostering intercultural awareness and tolerance.
Istiadi, N.Y., & Yuliati, Y. (2025)	Systematic Literature review	CRT pedagogy as knowledge ecology in EFL classrooms enhances cultural responsiveness, student engagement, and equitable learning; recommends ecological approach to curriculum design.

Based on the publication reviewed, most empirical studies employed qualitative approaches; there are six studies and two studies used mixed methods, indicating that CRT research mainly focuses on exploring classroom experiences, perceptions, and instructional practices in depth rather than relying solely on quantitative measurement. In addition, four studies adopted systematic literature review design to synthesize existing evidence regarding the effectiveness of CRT across different educational contexts. These findings suggest that researchers tend to examine CRT from interpretative and practice oriented perspectives to better understand how culturally responsive pedagogy operates in real classroom settings.

First, positive impacts of CRT were consistently reported across the reviewed studies. Siregar et al. (2023), for example, develop a culturally responsive English teaching model for Indonesian primary

school EFL teachers and found that integrating local cultural content, reflective teaching practices, and contextualized instructional strategies enhanced student engagement and strengthened cultural identity. Similarly, Comstock et al. (2023) revealed that professional learning significantly influences teachers' beliefs and self-efficacy in implementing CRT, which subsequently improves classrooms practices. Kyza and Georgiou (2025) also demonstrated that curriculum redesign integrating equity and active citizenship increases students' motivation, critical thinking, and social responsibility. These findings indicate that CRT support not only academic achievement but also students; personal and social development.

Second, several challenges in implementing CRT were identified, particularly within Indonesian educational contexts. Hidayati et al. (2024) found that the implementation of CRT within Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum is

hindered by limited teacher training and insufficient learning resources. Likewise Munandar and Newton (2021) reported that although Indonesian EFL teachers generally hold positive attitudes toward integrating culture into language learning, they still face obstacles such as exam pressure, lack of culturally relevant materials, and limited intercultural training. Jayanti and Mustofa (2023) further revealed that Indonesian EFL text books tend to underrepresent local cultures while prioritizing Western cultural content. Similar findings were reported by Rima et al. (2024), who found that teachers in Banten Province viewed CRT positively but struggled with inadequate training, limited resources, and time constraints. Setyowati (2020) also identified several barriers to multicultural education in Indonesia EFL classroom, including teacher unpreparedness, insufficient instructional materials and the dominance of exam oriented educational practices.

Third, the reviewed literature highlights important theoretical contributions from Ladson-Billings (2021) and Ladson-Billings et al. (2024), who provide foundational frameworks for understanding culturally relevant, responsive, and sustaining pluralistic cultural practices within educational settings. This theoretical development reflects a shift from merely recognizing cultural diversity to actively preserving and supporting it through educational practices,

Fourth, the transferability of CRT across disciplines and educational context was demonstrated in several studies. Liu et al. (2024) found that CRT principles, such as cultural awareness, inclusive curriculum, and asset-based instruction, can also be effectively applied in technical communication education. In Southeast Asian contexts, Puspita et al. (2024) conducted a systematic review showing that integrating local culture into English language teaching positively influences

students' attitudes and engagement, although implementation remains inconsistent across contexts. In addition, Istiadi and Yuliati (2025) proposed CRT pedagogy as a form of knowledge ecology in EFL classrooms, emphasizing that ecological curriculum design can enhance cultural responsiveness, student engagement, and equitable learning opportunities.

Fifth, several studies explored preservice teachers' perspectives on CRT. Jaya et al. (2024) found that Indonesian pre-service teachers positively perceived the integration of local wisdom into English courses because it strengthens cultural identity and increases student engagement. Similarly, Nurbatra and Masyhud (2022) concluded that integrating CRT into higher education supports multicultural education in Indonesia, although it requires curriculum redesign, lecture preparation and strong institutional commitment.

Overall findings, the reviewed literature consistently supports CRT as an effective pedagogical approach for creating inclusive, equitable, and culturally sustaining learning environment. However, substantial gaps remain in teacher preparation, curriculum resources, and institutional support, particularly in Indonesian EFL contexts. The development of practical CRT models, such as the one proposed by Siregar et al. (2023), offers promising directions for future implementation. Therefore, future research should focus on evaluating the long-term impact of CRT integration across different educational settings and addressing persistent challenges related to teacher training, curriculum development, and resources availability.

This study employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to examine relevant literature on the implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) for EFL Learners. Through an analysis of the similarities and

differences across the selected 20 studies, several major themes emerged. These themes include the importance of CRT in ELT writing instruction, the positive impact of CRT on students' writing development, used to implement CRT in ELT classrooms, challenges encountered in applying CRT within Indonesian contexts, as well as its implications and future directions for research and practice.

The implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) has shown a significant positive impact on various aspects of learning, particularly for students from diverse cultural backgrounds. CRT promotes an approach that not only acknowledges but also values cultural diversity, creating learning environment that are more inclusive, supportive, and meaningful. In the context of ELT writing instruction, CRT is especially important because writing is closely connected to learners' cultural identities, values, and ways of expressing ideas (Hyland, 2019; Lee, 2020; Matsuda, 2022). Previous studies indicate that integrating local cultural content into English instruction allows students to express themselves more authentically in writing activities (Jaya et al., 2024; Siregar et al., 2023). Furthermore, incorporating local wisdom into English writing activities can increase students' sense of relevance and engagement throughout the writing process (Cumming, 2016; Kramsch, 2021). These findings highlight the role of CRT in bridging the gap between EFL learners and writing materials that may otherwise feel culturally distant or disconnected from students' lived experiences (Alamsyah et al., 2024; Puspita et al., 2024).

The findings of this systematic review consistently show that culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) positively influences EFL learners' writing development in several important ways. First, CRT increases students' engagement and motivation in writing activities.

Alamsyah et al. (2024) found that the implementation of CRT improves both student participation and learning outcomes, which encourages learners to become more active and persistent in completing writing tasks. Second, CRT supports students in expressing their cultural identities through writing. Siregar et al. (2023) developed a CRT model for primary school EFL teachers that integrates local cultural content, enabling students to use their cultural knowledge and personal experiences when composing texts. Third, CRT contributes to improved learning outcomes, including the quality of students' writing. Comstock et al. (2023) reported that teachers' beliefs and self-efficacy regarding CRT are positively connected to their classroom practices, suggesting that effective CRT implementation can lead to more meaningful and culturally authentic student writing. Similarly, Kyza and Georgiou (2025) showed that curriculum redesign focused on equity enhances students' motivations and critical thinking skills, both of which are essential for effective academic writing. Puspita et al. (2024) also found that integrating local culture into English language teaching positively affects learners' attitudes and engagement, which serve as important foundations for writing development. In addition, Istiadi and Yuliati (2025) proposed CRT pedagogy as a form of knowledge ecology in EFL classrooms, emphasizing that writing should be understood as a culturally situated practice rather than merely a decontextualized linguistic skill.

The reviewed literature identifies several practical strategies for implementing CRT in ELT classrooms. First integrating local wisdom and cultural content into instructional materials is considered one of the most dominant approaches (Jaya et al., 2024; L. K. Siregar et al., 2023). Through culturally relevant materials, students are encouraged to connect language learning

with their own experiences and cultural identities. Second, teacher reflective practice supported by continuous professional learning is essential for strengthening teachers' beliefs and self-efficacy in applying CRT effectively (Comstock et al., 2023). Third, curriculum adaptation and redesign are necessary to improve students' motivation and critical thinking skills (Kyza & Georgiou, 2025). This process also requires lecturer preparation, institutional commitment, and supportive educational policies to ensure successful implementation (Nurbatra & Masyhud, 2022). Fourth, asset-based instruction, which views students' cultural backgrounds as valuable strengths rather than deficits, serves as a foundational principle of CRT (Liu et al., 2024). Overall, these strategies indicate that effective CRT implementation requires a holistic approach that combines culturally relevant materials, ongoing teacher development, institutional support, and asset-based pedagogical perspectives. Therefore, the success of CRT in ELT classrooms depends not only single instruction, but also the synergy between curriculum design, teacher training, and classroom practices.

Despite the positive contributions of CRT, the reviewed literature also highlights several major challenges in its implementations within Indonesian EFL Classrooms. One of the most significant barriers is the lack of teacher training and professional development related to culturally responsive pedagogy (Hidayati et al., 2024; Rima et al., 2024). Many teachers still have limited understanding of how to integrate cultural elements effectively into classroom instruction. In addition, the shortage of instructional materials and textbooks that adequately represent local cultures remains a serious issue, as English learning resources continue to be dominated by Western cultural perspectives rather than local content (Ariawan et al., 2022; Jayanti &

Mustofa, 2023). Another challenge is the strong exam-oriented culture and curriculum pressure that restrict teachers' flexibility in applying CRT practices. Previous studies found that teaching materials, and insufficient intercultural training (Munandar & Newton, 2021; Setyowati, 2020). Furthermore, limited institutional support and the lack of policy alignment also hinder the wider adoption of CRT in educational settings (Fitriani et al., 2023). Overall, these findings suggest that the successful implementation of CRT requires broader systemic changes that go beyond individual teacher efforts, including stronger institutional commitment, improved policy support, and greater allocation of educational resources.

The result of this study could provide implications for educational policy. Classroom practice, and teacher professional development. The reviewed studies indicate that CRT can enhance student engagement, strengthen learners' cultural identity, and create more inclusive learning environments for EFL students. Therefore, educational institutions and policymakers are encouraged to integrate CRT principles into curriculum design, lesson planning, and teacher training programs to support more meaningful and culturally relevant learning experience. From a theoretical perspective, this review also contributes to the growing literature on critical and inclusive pedagogy by highlighting the importance of culturally responsive practices in ELT, particularly in writing instruction. In addition, the findings open opportunities for further research focusing on more practical and context CRT strategies across different educational settings.

However, this study has limitations. The review was limited to 20 peer-reviewed articles obtained from Scopus and SINTA. Therefore, future research is recommended to expand the scope of literature, researcher could also adopt qualitative

approaches or more in-depth case studies to explore CRT on writing instruction and CRT practices implemented in classrooms.

Conclusion

Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) is not simply an instructional strategy, but a transformative pedagogical approach that positions cultural diversity as an essential asset in EFL education. As highlighted in this systematic review, the integration of local wisdom, and culturally relevant materials into English instruction helps create an inclusive learning environment where students feel recognized, respected, and encouraged to succeed, particularly in developing their language and writing skills. More than just delivering academic content, CRT connects classroom learning with students' lived experiences, allowing them to engage with learning materials in ways that are personally meaningful and culturally authentic. However, the successful implementation of CRT requires collaborative efforts from multiple stakeholders. Teachers need to continuously develop their professional competence and engage in reflective teaching practices. Through CRT, education extends beyond academic achievement and becomes a transformative process that helps EFL learners become more confident, culturally aware, critically conscious, and capable of appreciating diversity with empathy and respect.

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