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# A Content Analysis of Cultural Representation in a High School English Textbook in 2013 Education Curriculum

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### ABSTRACT

This study reports cultural content in the latest high school English textbook concerning the 2013 education curriculum. Besides, this paper also explores the intercultural communicative competence within the English textbooks. A qualitative research design is employed in this study. Moreover, the cultural contents and intercultural communicative competence were taken from the reading text on English textbooks for the last grade of senior high school entitled '*Bahasa Inggris 2018 revised edition*'. This study relied on the kind of cultural contents by Cortazzi & Jin (1999), types of cultural dimensions by Yuen (2011), and three levels of intercultural communicative competence by Byram (2002). It has been found that target culture with the cultural dimension of the product had a major proportion on the English textbook. Besides, the lowest level of intercultural communicative competence, namely basic cultural awareness was also discovered. In such a case, the complicity of intercultural values in the textbook should be given more attention so that students can easily grasp the values of various cultures. As a result, the aims of the 2013 education curriculum can be achieved well.

**Keywords:** cultural content; cultural dimension; education curriculum; English textbook; intercultural communicative competence

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## INTRODUCTION

The implementation of the curriculum in Indonesia has changed over time intending to adapt to the needs and demands of society. Historically, Indonesia had a curriculum for the first time in 1947. After going through several changes, the 2013 education curriculum or 'K-2013' is determined as the curriculum in Indonesia. The 2013 education curriculum is also inseparable from changes so that there have been several gradual revisions in it as improvements. According to Mardiana & Suyata (2017), the philosophical paradigm used in the 2013 education curriculum is an amalgamation of the basics of educational philosophy schools, namely idealism, perennials, and essentialism. Thus, the 2013 education curriculum aims to produce the future generation who are not only productive, innovative, and creative but also have good knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Sutrisno, 2013 as cited in Mardiana & Suyata, 2017). In this case, the younger generation is simply expected to have good morals and characters.

About the 2013 education curriculum, there is one core competency that focuses on comprehending and implementing knowledge based on a sense of curiosity about science, technology, arts, culture, and humanities. To achieve these objectives, the content of the learning material becomes a significant part to be considered. Therefore, the English textbook as a part of the commonly used

learning materials should provide comprehensive content so that the students are motivated to enrich their knowledge. In such a case, one of the contents to enrich knowledge is to include cultural concepts in the English textbook. It is in line with Nurjanah & Umaemah (2019) which stated that culture is the integral way of life consisting of a pattern of behavior, values, norms, and material objects that are learned and shared as well as how culture affects people live, think, talk, and behave. In other words, culture brings a wide coverage of life.

Besides, related to the concept of culture in English textbooks, there are three types of cultural content proposed by Cortazzi & Jin (1999) namely source culture, target culture, and international culture. Source culture refers to the students' own culture while the target culture refers to the culture of English-speaking countries such as the United States of America, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Canada, and Australia (Ayu, 2020). For the international target culture, it refers to the culture of countries where English is utilized as a second or a foreign language. Apart from involving the types of cultural content, EFL materials also include four cultural dimensions proposed by Yuen (2011), namely products, practices, perspectives, and persons. In the first dimension, products can refer to food (pizza, chicken soup), building (toll road, mall), travel (tourist attraction such as Borobudur temple, Bali beach), and

literary works (short stories, poems, news, novel, songs' lyric). Next, person reflects famous people (artists, singers, presidents, comedians), practices refer to the cultural celebration or specific activities (Diwali, Ngaben), and perspectives refer to the perception of the situation in the countries (air pollution, online learning).

Furthermore, the cultural concepts involved in English textbooks are expected to foster students' cultural awareness. In this regard, Byram et al., (2002) suggested three classifications of intercultural communicative competence to evaluate whether the English textbooks are best used to increase students' intercultural awareness or not. The categories of intercultural communicative competence are shown from the lowest to the highest levels, namely basic cultural awareness, advanced cultural awareness, intercultural awareness. At each level, Byram et al. (2002) provide several statements as a measure of English textbook suitability.

Several researchers have conducted studies on analyzing cultural content in English textbooks. For instance, Samsudin (2019) investigating the cultural aspects in three English textbooks for senior high school published by the Ministry of Education and Culture, and Nurjanah & Umaemah (2019) conducting a study on cultural content in the textbook for second grade in senior high school. Other studies concerning research on cultural content in English textbooks have also been done by Faris (2014). He analyzed the cultural

content of an English textbook for senior high school grade three in Cianjur, West Java. Contrary to several previous studies, this research reveals the cultural content of English textbooks by associating the basic philosophy of the 2013 education curriculum as a gap from previous research. This qualitative study is extremely appealing to examine the cultural content of the latest edition of English textbooks by associating it with the fundamentals of curriculum formation which is dissimilar from previous studies. Therefore, this study attempts to reveal: (1) what culture is predominantly represented in the English textbook?; (2) what are the cultural dimensions that display in the English textbook?; and (3) how does the English textbook promote the mastery of intercultural communicative competence? research.

## **METHOD**

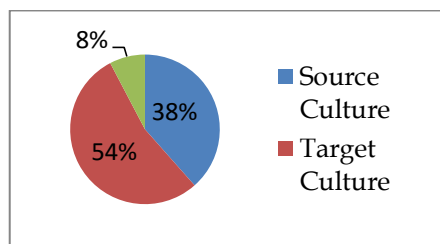
This study employed a qualitative research design since it was conducted based on descriptive data. By implementing a descriptive content analysis approach, this study attempts to explore the obtained data which are in the form of words or phrases. The data source was an English textbook for the last grade of senior high school entitled '*Bahasa Inggris 2018 revised edition*' and published by the Ministry of Education and Culture (Widiati et al., 2018). Moreover, the 13 reading texts from 11 chapters are used as sample data in this study. For cultural content, this study was limited to reading texts which also had a learning task. English textbook entitled '*Bahasa Inggris*

2018 revised edition' was chosen due to the most recent revision of the model. The techniques of data collection were done by three types, namely (1) observation technique where the English textbook is observed; (2) documentation technique where the English textbook is downloaded from the official website of Ministry of Education and Culture; (3) the note-taking technique where the obtained data are written. When the English textbook was downloaded, the research procedure conducted as follows: (1) selecting the reading text and the learning task; (2) classifying the data obtained based on the type of cultural contents (Cortazzi & Jin, 1999) type of cultural dimensions (Yuen, 2011) (3) analyzing the data by linking to the intercultural communicative competence categories by Byram et al. (2002).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

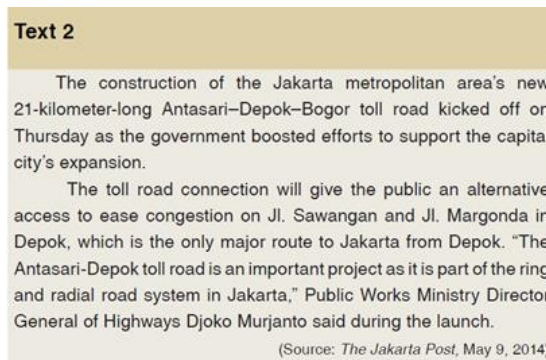
The study aims to explore the cultural content of the latest edition of English textbooks by connecting with the basics of curriculum formation.

Three types of cultural content proposed by Cortazzi & Jin (1999), namely source culture, target culture, and international culture are presented in this part. For the data display, the results of cultural content in the English textbook entitled '*Bahasa Inggris 2018 revised edition*' can be seen in Picture 1.



Picture 1. Cultural content categories

As can be seen in Picture 1, the proportion of target culture is the most used in an English textbook, followed by source culture and international culture. It is in line with Nurjanah & Umaemah (2019) which show that target culture has a large amount in the textbook while international culture has only the smallest part there. It is also in line with Mustofa & Martina (2019) which denote that international culture only represents the smallest number. This is because, through the target culture, students can enhance their knowledge of the original culture where English is used as the official language. Furthermore, the source culture is also represented in the English textbook to provide insight into students' own culture. In this case, the source culture is Indonesian culture. The smallest portion is an international culture which is used to enhance students' awareness of various cultures besides target and source culture. For a deeper analysis, the examples of each category of cultural content are described below.



Picture 2. News concerning Jakarta

Picture 2 indicates the current situation in a metropolitan city, namely Jakarta. As the capital city of Indonesia, Jakarta is often in the spotlight for everything, one of which is the traffic jam.

Therefore, the above text discusses the construction of Antasari-Depok-Bogor toll road to reduce congestion that occurs there. From the short news of Jakarta, it can be considered as a part of the source culture.

#### Six Things to Do if You Visit Seattle

There are 6 must-have experiences that you should do if you visit Seattle where city and nature come together. If you visit Seattle, arrive with this list in hand and you'll be off to a foolproof start for exploring the Emerald City's most unforgettable sights and sounds. If you visit Seattle, do the following things:

1. Feel the fresh air on your face as you sail to Bainbridge Island on a Washington State Ferry. From the ferry you can enjoy the view of the Seattle skyline. If you want to enjoy



**Picture 3. Reading text on Seattle**

Based on the text above, Seattle includes in one of the largest cities in Washington, United States of America. Seattle becomes a popular seaport city for both domestic and foreign tourists. Plenty of tourist spots are offered there, among others Washington State Ferry, Pike Place Market, Sun Juan Island, Chihuly Garden and Glass, Boeing factory in Mukilteo, and the Theo Chocolate Factory in Fremont. By reading the snippet text in Picture 3, students learn more about the original culture of the English language's home country.

3. **Get the incubator ready for the eggs and provide a lay box.** You can use a plastic sandwich container with a lid for this purpose. Cut an entry hole on one side and fill it with damp moss (This can be used as the moist hide too).

4. **Ready the laying box to put in the cage.**

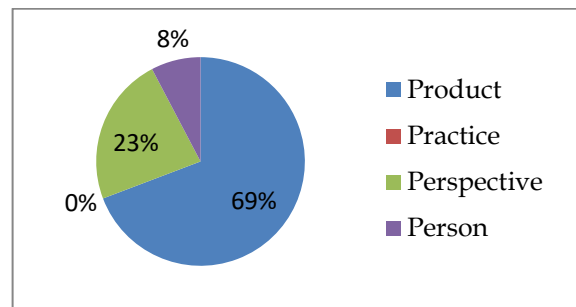
Females dig to lay their eggs, so you will provide a place for them to dig. In about 4 to 5 weeks, the female will lay her eggs. Normally, you will see her digging in the laying box and laying the eggs in pairs. It will be easy to tell she has laid the eggs, particularly since she will be much thinner.



#### Picture 4. Leopard geckos in procedure text

In Picture 4, it is shown the way to breed leopard geckos. This animal is also known as panther gecko which is native to arid and semi-desert regions of Iraq, Afghanistan, northwest India, and Iran. Besides, the yellow color with uneven black spots becomes a characteristic of this type of lizard. By learning the procedure text of leopard geckos, students enrich their knowledge concerning international culture.

Besides, the answer to the second research question is provided that is the cultural dimensions proposed by Yuen (2011). He distinguished four categories of cultural dimensions those are products, practices, perspectives, and persons. The categories of cultural dimensions discovered in the textbook are shown in Picture 5 below.



**Picture 5. Cultural dimension categories**

Based on Picture 5, the product is the most predominant cultural dimension in the English textbook, followed by perspective, person, and practice. As stated by Nurjanah & Umaemah (2019) that the most widely used cultural dimension is the product. The cultural dimension of the product is inversely proportional to the cultural dimension of practice where there is no single content included. Several types of products are displayed in the textbook those are food,

technology, building, travel, and song lyrics. Moreover, in the cultural dimension of perspective, the news items are represented to show the people's perspectives toward their country. For the cultural dimension of people, there are only 8% in the textbook while for the cultural dimension of practice, there is none at all. Several illustrations are presented below as examples of each cultural dimension in the textbook.

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**How to Operate Photoshop: Tutorial for Beginners**

When you open Photoshop for the first time, it's easy to click around in confusion for a minute and then reach for your freelancer's phone number instead. With a little help, you can easily teach yourself how to use it to create beautiful, compelling graphics. All it takes is an introduction to core elements. To get you started, you need to understand how the five most important Photoshop tools work. The five tools are the Layer Tool, the Color

**Picture 6. Photoshop as a cultural product in technology**

Picture 6 is the procedure text of the way to operate Photoshop. It is application software for the computer which is used for editing digital images. Historically, two American brothers, namely Thomas and John Knoll are the inventor of Photoshop in 1987. As a cultural product in technology, Photoshop has represented the modern culture originating from the target culture.

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**Indonesia Opens Regional Recycling Conference**

Petrus Riski

February 25, 2014 1:44 PM

SURABAYA, INDONESIA—Indonesia has opened a regional recycling conference aimed at increasing **awareness** of waste management for economic and environmental benefits.

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The Fifth Regional 3R Forum in Asia and the Pacific, which opened in Surabaya Tuesday, is being attended by 300 participants from nearly 40 Asia and Pacific countries.

The city was chosen to host the event because of its success in managing **municipal** waste through the 3Rs, Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle.

Mayor Tri Rismaharini said waste transportation is expensive and that the best way to address the problem is at its sources, with every **household** involved in recycling activities. "We can see that every year there is a **reduction** in the volume of **trash** that ends up in the **landfills**. When I was the head of Sanitation and Parks, it was 2,300 cubic meters per day. Currently it's 1,200 cubic meters," she explained. "So you can see the **reduction**, which goes to **composting center**, also in the community, and waste management centers."

**Picture 7. Waste management awareness as a cultural perspective**

The Picture above is a perspective of Tri Rismaharini as a Mayor of Surabaya on the situation of waste management. The way to manage the waste is discussed with many considerations since it is closely related to economic growth and environmental hygiene. At the conference, Mayor Tri Rismaharini suggested the 3Rs (reduce, reuse, and recycle) as the best solution to solve the waste problems. She suggested that technique since her success in managing municipal waste through 3Rs has been proven.

British playwright Harold Pinter, a master of sparse dialog and menacing silences who has been an outspoken critic of the U.S.-led war in Iraq, was the surprise \_\_\_\_\_ of the Nobel literature prize on Thursday.

The 75-year-old Londoner, \_\_\_\_\_ of a Jewish dressmaker, is one of Britain's best-known dramatists for plays \_\_\_\_\_ *The Birthday Party* and *The Caretaker*, whose mundane dialog with sinister undercurrents gave rise to the adjective "Pinteresque".

An intimidating presence with bushy eyebrows and a rich voice, he was \_\_\_\_\_ by Swedish Academy head Horace Engdahl, who \_\_\_\_\_ the prize, as "the towering figure" in English drama in the second half of the 20th century.

Pinter \_\_\_\_\_ Reuters Television he was overwhelmed by the \_\_\_\_\_: "I haven't had time to think about it \_\_\_\_\_ I am very, very moved. It was something I did not \_\_\_\_\_ at all at any time."

(Taken from: *The Jakarta Post*, October 14, 2005)

**Picture 8. British playwright as a cultural dimension of a person**

Based on the cloze text above, the cultural dimension of a person from London named Harold Pinter is presented. This man who was born in 1930 was a multitalented person due to his fruitfulness of various professions such as screenwriter, playwright, actor, and director. Harold Pinter was also a triumph for several reputable awards such as Nobel Prize in 2005 and Laurence Olivier Awards in 1996. Heretofore, his most famous plays are *Betrayal* (1978), *The Birthday Party* (1957), and *The Homecoming* (1964).

Furthermore, the answer to the third research question is provided that is whether this English textbook is best used to increase students' intercultural awareness or not. In this case, the theory suggested by Byram et al. (2002) is employed as a measure of English textbook suitability. Table 1 below is the results of measuring the English textbook.

**Table 1. Intercultural communicative competence level in the English textbook**

Levels	Description	Mentioned/N of Mentioned
Basic cultural awareness	Culture as a set of shared behaviors, beliefs, and values;	Mentioned
	The role of culture and context play in any interpretation of meaning;	Mentioned
	Our own culturally induced behavior, values, and beliefs and the ability to articulate this;	Mentioned
	Others' culturally induced behavior, values, and beliefs and the ability to compare this with our own culturally induces behavior, values, and beliefs.	Not mentioned
Advanced cultural awareness	The relative nature of cultural norms;	Not mentioned
	Cultural understanding is provisional and open to revision;	Not mentioned
	Multiple voices or perspectives within any	Not mentioned

Intercultural awareness	cultural grouping; Individual as members of many social groupings including cultural ones;	Not mentioned
	The common ground between specific cultures as well as awareness of the possibility of mismatch and miscommunication between specific cultures.	Not mentioned
	Culturally based frames of reference, forms, and communicative practices as being related both to specific cultures and also as emergent and hybrid in intercultural communication;	Not mentioned
	Initial interaction in intercultural communication as possible based on cultural stereotypes or generalizations but an ability to move beyond these through;	Not mentioned
	A capacity to negotiate and mediate between different emergent socio-culturally grounded communication modes and frames of reference based on the above understanding of culture in intercultural communication.	Not mentioned

From Table 1 above, it can be seen that only 3 out of 4 basic cultural awareness criteria are included in the English textbook. Meanwhile, the criteria for the second level (advanced cultural awareness) and the third level (intercultural awareness) have not been mentioned at all. This can be concluded that the English textbook entitled '*Bahasa Inggris 2018 revised edition*' has not promoted students' intercultural awareness. As stated by Byram et al. (2002) that knowledge, skills, and attitudes are the elements of intercultural competence. By having intercultural insight, students

can grasp the way the diverse group will interact with each other. They also can relate, compare, and interpret foreign cultures and their own culture, as well as allow them to tolerate since different cultures inevitably shape different results. Thus, if those three elements are not maximally presented in the textbook, the objectives of the 2013 education curriculum cannot be achieved properly. In such a case, the complicity of intercultural values in the textbook should be given more attention so that students can easily grasp the values of various cultures. As a result, the aims of the 2013 education curriculum can be achieved well.

## CONCLUSION

Cultural content in English textbooks is significant to be considered since it can encourage students in achieving the objectives of the 2013 education curriculum. In this study, the target culture has more than 50% in representing its culture in the English textbook. It is because students need to know the culture of the English language's home country. Meanwhile, source culture and international culture only represent a small number of its culture in the English textbook entitled '*Bahasa Inggris 2018 revised edition*'. Furthermore, in the cultural dimension, products receive the largest number that is 69%, followed by perspectives, person, and practices. In this study, several types of products are presented, among other food, technology, building, travel, and song lyrics.

In addition, related to intercultural communicative competence, this English textbook only mentions 3 out of 4 criteria in basic cultural awareness. Whereas, the next two levels, namely advanced cultural awareness and intercultural awareness have not been mentioned at all in the textbook. In such a case, it can be concluded that this English textbook promotes the lowest level of intercultural communicative competence. For future research, exploring other kinds of cultural content from other perspectives such as the aesthetic sense, sociological sense, semantic sense, and pragmatic sense is highly recommended.

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## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

All authors contributed equally to this work.

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