

An Analysis of Cultural Contents in EFL Textbook: “Bahasa Inggris untuk SMP/MTs Kelas VII”

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Abstract

EFL textbooks are optimal resources for EFL teachers and students, providing essential materials for teaching and learning English. Cultural content in these textbooks is an important aspect that needs attention, because it plays an important role in shaping EFL students' attitudes and beliefs towards other cultures, especially in MTsN 1 school in Palangka Raya city. This study aims to find out (1) what aspects are included in the cultural content presented in the "Bahasa Inggris untuk SMP/MTs Kelas VII" textbook. then (2) What is the meaning of culture presented in the "Bahasa Inggris untuk SMP/MTs Kelas VII" textbook? Cultural content will be studied using descriptive and qualitative methods. The research subject is taken from the EFL Textbook: "Bahasa Inggris untuk SMP/MTs Kelas VII". The data sources used are the cultural content contained in the research books, observations and documents. The analysis in this study includes data collection, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The research shows that the textbook "Bahasa Inggris untuk SMP/MTs Kelas VII" has an unbalanced ratio between the four aspects of culture (product, practice, perspective and society). The practical side dominates the content of the book, followed by the product side, the opinion side, and the social side. There are three types of cultural content in secondary school textbooks: source culture, target culture and international culture. Textbooks present more source culture than target culture and international culture.

Keywords: Textbooks, Culture, Cultural Content, Cultural Dimention, Cultural Categories.

Abstrak

Buku teks EFL adalah sumber daya yang optimal bagi guru dan siswa EFL, menyediakan materi penting untuk mengajar dan belajar bahasa Inggris. Muatan budaya dalam buku ajar tersebut merupakan aspek penting yang perlu mendapat perhatian, karena berperan penting dalam membentuk sikap dan keyakinan siswa EFL terhadap budaya lain khususnya di sekolah MTsN 1 kota Palangka Raya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui (1) aspek apa saja yang termasuk dalam muatan budaya yang disajikan dalam buku ajar “Bahasa Inggris untuk SMP/MTs Kelas VII”. lalu (2) Apa makna budaya yang disajikan dalam buku ajar “Bahasa Inggris untuk SMP/MTs Kelas VII”? Konten budaya akan dipelajari dengan menggunakan metode deskriptif dan kualitatif. Subyek penelitian diambil dari EFL Textbook: "Bahasa Inggris untuk SMP/MTs Kelas VII". Sumber data yang digunakan adalah muatan budaya yang terdapat dalam buku penelitian, observasi dan dokumen. Analisis dalam penelitian ini meliputi pengumpulan data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa buku teks “Bahasa Inggris untuk SMP/MTs Kelas VII” memiliki rasio yang tidak seimbang antara empat aspek budaya (produk, praktik, perspektif dan masyarakat). Sisi praktis mendominasi isi buku, disusul sisi produk, sisi opini, dan sisi sosial. Ada tiga jenis muatan budaya dalam buku pelajaran sekolah menengah: budaya sumber, budaya sasaran, dan budaya internasional. Buku teks lebih banyak menyajikan budaya sumber dibandingkan budaya sasaran dan budaya internasional.

Kata Kunci: Buku Ajar, Budaya, Muatan Budaya, Dimensi Budaya, Kategori Budaya.

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INTRODUCTION

Textbooks have an impact on the quality of learning; in addition to their function as learning materials, textbooks are also important educational tools used by teachers and students. Muhsen (2017), quoting Lappalainen (2011), said: "Textbooks include books developed and published for educational

purposes or even any book used as an aid in the classroom. In addition, he also said that English textbooks serve as guidelines to help or shape awareness of the English language and culture. In other words, textbooks provide guidance for the EFL teaching and learning process. Therefore, textbooks serve as guidelines for students at a certain level and as educational learning materials in certain fields of study (Depdiknas 2004:4). For teachers and students, the use of textbooks in the classroom is very beneficial. Teachers will use the content of the textbook as an outline or summarized lesson plan to support their understanding. Textbooks will help students take notes and highlight important information about the lesson topic. While it is true that students may forget what they learn in class, there is no denying that manual teaching is more effective in helping students remember information. Therefore, textbooks are very important in teaching and learning English.

Culture, from many people's perspective, is complicated to explain. Culture can be defined in various ways and affects all aspects of a person's behaviour in their community, including beliefs, values, attitudes and patterns of habitual or expected behaviour. According to Zaenuril's research, also cited by Dewantara, culture is a consequence of human perception, the result of human conflict with two strong factors (nature and society). Then, according to Edward Tylor, culture is a broad concept that includes the abilities and habits developed by humans in social life, including knowledge, beliefs, art, laws and ethics. At the same time, Moerman describes culture as "a system of living principles, combined with the results of this system" in Hinkel (1999). Therefore, culture can be generally summed up as a set of views, concepts and beliefs that are applied to explain the behaviour, speech and thought processes of others. In order to adapt when learning a new language and culture, it is very important for language learners to understand different cultures, both their own and those of others.

The relationship between language and culture is also very complex and diverse. According to many scholars, culture is an expression of language and cannot exist without language (Kaikkonen, 1994, cited in Lappailanen, 2011, p. 9). The symbiotic relationship between language and culture is also cited on page 35 of Fantini (1995) and Moran (2001). In fact, language shapes and reflects culture and vice versa. In addition, Jiang (2000, p. 328) uses the metaphor of an "iceberg" to explain how language and culture interact. Language is the most visible part, but the invisible part of culture is the most important and hidden part.

Because of the unique relationship between language and culture, many researchers and teachers emphasize the important role of culture in the teaching and learning process. This means that teachers need to realize that there are cultures other than British and American culture to be considered in the EFL teaching and learning process.

Nowadays, the use of culture in textbooks for teaching English as a second or foreign language is becoming popular because of the close relationship between language and culture. Therefore, textbooks become an important part of teaching English as a second language as they can teach students about cultural aspects through books. According to Dor (2013, p. 281), it is important to choose the right textbook because textbooks provide examples for cultural discussion and interpretation.

EFL textbooks contain a variety of cultural content, including cultural values, beliefs, customs, and practices. This content is often used to help students understand the cultural context of English, as well as develop their intercultural skills. However, some criticisms have emerged regarding the representation of culture in EFL textbooks, especially the dominant cultural perspective presented in many textbooks.

According to Li (2015), EFL textbooks often reflect the culture of English-speaking countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom. This can lead to cultural expressions from other cultures, changing cultural thinking and understanding. For example, Lee found that EFL literature often portrays Chinese culture as foreign and lacking a reputation for modernity.

In addition, EFL textbooks may contain content that is inappropriate or offensive to certain cultures. For example, Alptekin (2002) found that some EFL texts used derogatory terms to describe certain cultures, for example describing people from the Middle East as terrorists. . This can be detrimental to students' self-esteem because of the tradition of facing such negative thoughts. Given the potential impact of cultural content in EFL textbooks, it is important to assess the cultural content in such textbooks. Cultural assessment involves examining the cultural content of textbooks, determining what is good and what is bad, and evaluating the appropriateness of that content. Therefore, the author wanted to study the cultural content in the textbook "Bahasa Inggris untuk SMP/MTs Kelas VII" at MTsN 1 Kota Palangka Raya.

This study evaluates the representation of cultural content in English textbooks at MTsN 1 Kota Palangka Raya by collecting data on all written texts, including readings, dialogues, and quotations. The Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture released a textbook entitled "English for Junior High School/MT Grade VII" in 2020 and was used as the data source for this study. This is because this book is often used as the core curriculum recommended by the government in most schools in Indonesia. Therefore, this book was chosen as the source of the study. This English textbook includes 84 pages and 4 chapters covering 4 language skills and 3 language components. Most of the cultural content is in this book. Sometimes it appears as a noun that has an explanation, especially in school textbooks, and sometimes the original content of a literary work such as a story is revealed. and this research will be analyzed using Cortazzi and Jinn's (1999) cultural categories theory and Yuen's (2011) cultural dimensions theory.

METHOD

This study, Analyzing Cultural Content in EFL Textbooks: "Bahasa Inggris untuk SMP/MTs Kelas VII" examines how cultural content is conveyed in English textbooks. In this case, researchers who analyze cultural content need to conduct research using descriptive-qualitative methods. This research will use cultural dimensions and cultural categories to evaluate the texts and images in the English textbook compiled for this first semester. The data is also evaluated by identification or analysis.

The data source of this study is collected from the revised English textbook based on the 2013 curriculum, "Bahasa Inggris untuk SMP/MTs Kelas VII". The researchers will review four chapters of the book. The information obtained in the whole chapter is based on Yuen's (2011) theory of cultural aspects, specifically products (PDT), perspectives (PPV), practices (PRC) and Persons (PS), as well as Cortazzi and Jin's (1999) theory of cultural categories, specifically Source Culture (SC), International Culture (IC) and Target Culture (TC). The data collection process allowed the author to systematically collect information about the object of research. The following are the steps of data collection: The researcher starts by selecting relevant textbooks to be used as sample texts for analysis. The researcher will then determine the categories and units of analysis to be used. The researchers then examined the cultural materials contained in the textbooks using Yuen's (2001) cultural dimensions theory and Cortazzi and Jinn's (1999) cultural forms theory. In addition, the encryption contained data to facilitate the researcher's analysis. The researcher divided the information into groups according to the theory of cultural dimensions and cultural categories. The researcher then tallied the data, interpreted the findings, and drew conclusions.

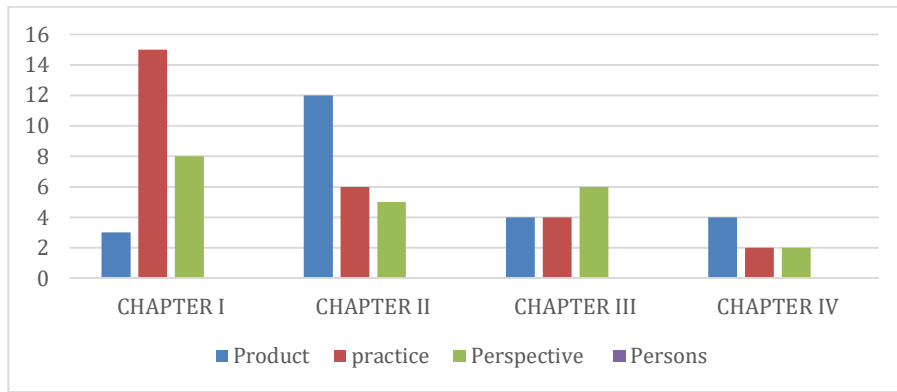
Analysis is the process of reducing the large amount of data collected by summarizing and classifying it into more specific and organized data (Kawulich, 2004, p. 97). In this study, the author used Huberman, Miles, and Sladana's (2014) interaction analysis model. This type of analysis involves four steps: data collection, data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, it was found that cultural content was presented in the textbook "English for Junior High School/MT Grade VII". Two data results were analyzed according to the method used. The first part discusses Yuen's (2011) four cultural dimensions, and the second part discusses Cortazzi and Jinn's (1999) cultural categories. Both are represented by two-column graphs as follows:

Cultural Dimentions

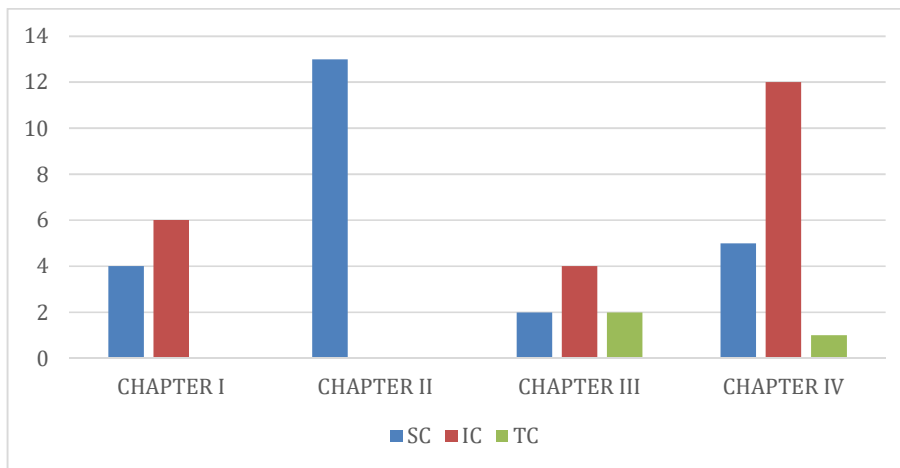
This study analyzes four aspects of cultural content in textbooks applied by Yuen (2011). According to Yuen (2011), cultural aspects include four cultural categories: products, practices, perspectives, and Persons. From these four categories, the researcher can analyze the data so that the bar chart below shows the results found by the researcher.



Picture 1. The Dimintions of Culture

Cultural Categories

The three cultural categories presented in this guide are based on the ideas of Cortazzi and Jin (1999). We classify cultural information that can be used in textbooks and language materials into three categories. The three types are source culture, target culture, and international culture. The cultural categories listed in this guidebook are shown in the Column chart below.



Picture 2. Categories of Culture

Discussion

The Dimention of Culture

Based on the results of the column chart data above, the author found that among the four aspects of culture (product, practice, perspective and Persons) proposed by Yuen (2011), the Practice aspect dominates in terms of quantity, followed by the Culture aspect. Product, Perspective, and Person dimensions. The practice dimension is widely expressed in daily life and daily conversations with diverse topics, especially in chapters 1 and 2, namely, asking and giving help as well as advice and suggestions. In chapters 3 and 4, the author found statements related only to practices, and there were a number of texts of different types that contained some statements about practices. Next is the product dimension, which is displayed through text, dialogue, spaces, add-ons, and visual illustrations. In chapters 1,2,3 and 4, there are no exceptions. The information conveyed by the product dimension is

the name of the city or country, the name of the institution, the name of the institution, the organization, the name of the vehicle, the name of the place or entertainment, the name of the vehicle or technology, the symbol of the name of the present, the name of literature and the name of the food product. In addition to the practical aspect, the perspective aspect in this book is also expressed through narrative texts, including dialog texts and written texts, especially argumentative texts that convey one's point of view, ideas and teachings. This cultural aspect is also seen in writing exercises such as filling in the blanks. The perspective dimension is found in chapters 2, 3, and 4, while all the visual information of the perspective dimension is shown only in chapters 1 and 2 because the topic is about conversational dialogue, and the visual depiction of culture sometimes contains personal thoughts or opinions. The last one is the Persons Dimension; the People Dimension is not found in chapters 1, 2, 3, and 4. Because the textbook "English for Junior High School/Middle School Grade VII" does not discuss heavy theories, this book only focuses on explaining the use of English, and this book is intended for grade VII. Therefore, the discussion is still very light. Among all the cultural aspects that the author found in this book, there are some illustrations and rules that describe the five aspects below.



Picture 3. Visiting the sick as a Practical dimension

(11/Chap.01/P.3/PRC), Shows Indonesian cultural practices, which are perceptions, values and beliefs that guide social behaviour. An example is visiting the sick, which shows empathy and solidarity.



Picture 4. Yoyakarta monument as a dimension product

(13/Chap.02/P.20/PDT), Tugu Yogyakarta is an important historical site located in the city of Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Tugu means monument and is often erected as a symbol of regional character. Because of its historical background, Tugu Yogyakarta has become a symbol of Yogyakarta's history.



Picture 5. Eating Together as Perspective dimension

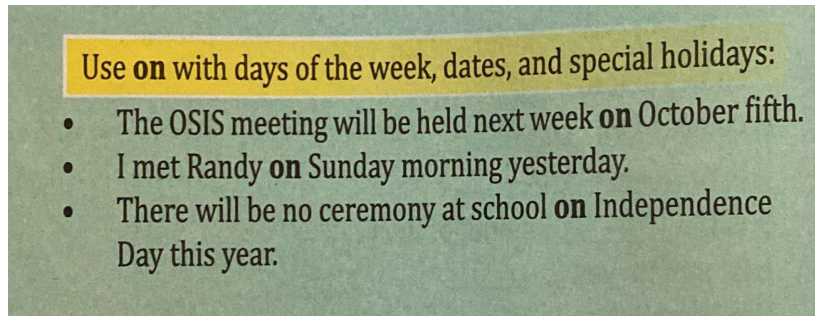
(19/Chap.03/P.47/PPV), Eating together is a popular activity around the world and has different meanings in different cultures. In Indonesia, eating together has strong cultural and social values. In Indonesia, eating together is often done by sitting on the floor and eating with your hands. In Indonesia, the tradition of eating together often involves many people and becomes a gathering place for extended family, friends, or even neighbours.

The Cultural Categories

We have discussed three types of culture. Based on the table in column 2.1 above. This figure shows a comparison between the three cultural categories used by Cortazi and Jinn (1999) to classify cultural origins. Cortazi and Jinn explained that there are three types of cultural information in textbooks: source culture, international culture, and target culture. After analyzing each chapter, the first cultural content that the researcher wants to discuss in this article is the source culture. The research shows that the source culture content is the most numerous in quantity. Source culture content basically features city names, street names, locations, and conversations related to Indonesian culture. Various regional themes can be found in most of Perspective's works and dialog activities. Most of the products, practices and perspectives are developed by Indonesians and the topics covered are very specific and culturally diverse. Therefore, the source culture appears to be more dominant than the international culture and target culture.

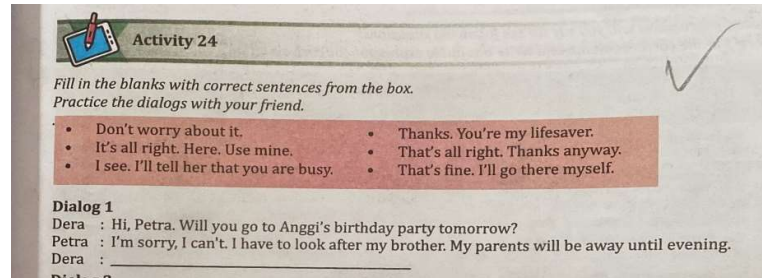
Furthermore, the second cultural content that the author tries to explain in this book based on his research results is international culture. The book provides a comprehensive introduction and presentation of this culture. The presence of the culture is slightly better than the original, but there still seems to be a lack of realism. There is no cross-cultural exchange, such as the ASEAN countries but rather the United Kingdom and the United States. The last one is Target Culture, which only applies to some English-speaking countries. References to this target culture are only found in chapters 3 and 4 which specifically mention modern products: ukulele, British English and American English. Therefore, this target culture is ranked third because it is at least mentioned in the textbook "Bahasa Inggris untuk

SMP/MTs kelas VII". Below are examples of cultural categories found in the textbook "Bahasa Inggris untuk SMP/MTs kelas VII":



Picture 6. OSIS as Source Culture

(19/Chap.03/P.52/PDT/SC) According to Abdul Halim, quoted from Menurut.id, "OSIS" is a forum for students in which positive activities can be realized which are expected to improve the quality of education, mental development, and the formation of student character. This organization only exists in Indonesia, so it is included in Cultural Resources.



Picture 7. Birthday Party as International Culture

(4/Chap.01/P.15/PRC/IC) Birthday parties are annual celebrations held by people all over the world, including Indonesia. Throw a party with your family, friends and loved ones or do any other activity that brings you joy and happiness. These customs are widespread around the world without exception and their contents are part of international culture.



Figure 8. Ukulele as Target Culture

(22/Chap.04/P.52/PDT/TC), The Ukulele is a small guitar-like stringed instrument measuring about 20 inches and is a Hawaiian musical instrument invented around 1879. Ukulele comes from the

word "uke", which means "insect".bug" and "lele", which means "jump" in the Hawaiian language. This musical instrument entered Indonesia by the Portuguese and is identical to keroncong music. So, this Ukulele is included in Target Culture.

CONCLUSION

In this study, based on the textbook "Bahasa Inggris untuk SMP/MTs Kelas VII", we collected and analyzed the ratio of Yuen's (2011) four cultural aspects and found that the results were unbalanced. The practical aspect constitutes the largest part of the content of the book, followed by the product aspect, perspective aspect, and persons aspect. Most of the meanings of the product dimension are explained by short and simple mentions in the text without the need for further explanation. The actual topics of conversation and dialog are too monotonous, generic, or do not refer to specific cultures. Some taboos and national values are also not represented in the perspective. and The book only discusses light content. Furthermore, the type of cultural content in textbooks often comes from three types of cultural content: source culture, target culture, and international culture. English textbooks contain more source culture (Indonesian culture) than target culture or international culture. This comparison is ideal because Indonesian English textbooks should focus on local content. Indonesian English textbooks should focus more on local content while introducing students to target and international cultures. Contextualizing and localizing EFL materials is beneficial because it can increase awareness of local culture. To avoid misunderstandings in communication, it is necessary to compare other people's cultures with international cultures to obtain information.

Based on the results of this study, English textbook writers should consider considering these three types of culture equally. It would be more effective if the chapters were designed to reveal cultural forms in detail, as the researcher learned in the textbook. Sections on cultural considerations and cultural notes should be added at the end of each chapter. The author should also allocate a balanced amount to each aspect. Specifically, the two smallest dimensions are the perspective dimension and the Persons dimension. Easy-to-read visual illustrations should also be added to stimulate students' interest. English teachers should not rely on textbooks as the main source of knowledge when teaching. Teachers' existing cultural knowledge is necessary for students to develop cultural knowledge and awareness of different types of cultures. Teachers can use other effective sources of cultural education such as the Internet and authentic materials such as newspapers, videos, movies and novels.

For further research: The results of this study can be used as a reference for further research on the same topic. This type of research is transferable, allowing similar research to be conducted within different theoretical frameworks and boundaries.

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