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AN ANALYSIS OF TYPES AND CATEGORIES CULTURE REPRESENTATION IN INDONESIAN ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS FOR JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Azziyadi

Master of English Education Study Program, Universitas Riau, Indonesia

Corresponding author: azziyadi7056@grad.unri.ac.id

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Abstract

Most educators in Indonesia are insufficiently aware of the importance of fostering cultural awareness among students. This problem stems from the cultural context presented in the textbooks used in classroom teaching and learning, especially in the context of English. This study seeks to explore cultural representations and analyze the cultural content presented in Indonesian textbooks designed for senior high school students studying EFL. Using a descriptive qualitative methodology with a cross-cultural perspective, this research examines the cultural content and themes in three e-English teaching textbooks: English When English Rings Bell VII, English When English Rings Bell VII, and English Think Globally Act Locally IX, revised edition (2017), by Kemdikbud RI. Textbook analysis was guided by the cultural framework introduced by Cortazzi and Jin (1999), which specifically focuses on Target Culture, Source Culture, and International Culture. This textbook was chosen because it is commonly adopted in Indonesian junior high schools and officially published by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture. The results of this research indicate a significant amount of content from the source culture, while the presence of the target culture and international culture remains quite limited. Additionally, among the 19 cultural elements classified under Big Culture and Small Culture, topics related to Small Culture were the most frequently featured. These outcomes draw attention to existing inequalities and underscore the importance of adopting a more inclusive and well-rounded approach to cultural instruction in English language education. By identifying these imbalances and broadening the range of cultural representations, teachers can better equip students with cross-cultural skills and nurture a deeper appreciation of diverse worldviews.

Keywords:

*Textbooks,
Type Culture,
Categories Culture*

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INTRODUCTION

Culture is a core element of human life, encompassing a wide range of dimensions, including values, societal customs, and political structures, that are transmitted across generations (Spencer-Oatey, 2012). It is widely acknowledged that language and culture are deeply interconnected, and achieving full proficiency in a language requires understanding the cultural context in which it is used. Numerous scholars have thoroughly examined the interplay between language and culture, particularly within the fields of language education and acquisition. Awayed-Bishara (2015) analyzed the cultural representation in English textbooks used by Arab students in Israel and found a strong focus on Jewish culture, reinforcing Jewish and Western cultural dominance. Illie (2019) underlined the need for English textbooks that are locally adapted yet reflect global cultural perspectives, aiming to strengthen students' global cultural understanding. McKay (2003) also stressed the importance of incorporating cultural content into ELT materials to introduce learners to diverse cultural practices and enrich their vocabulary and cross-cultural understanding. A number of previous studies have similarly explored how culture is portrayed in language acquisition textbooks.

Qodriani and Kardiansyah (2018) examined Indonesian English e-textbooks and discovered a discerning integration of cultural themes aimed at increasing both educators' and learners' knowledge of the interconnectedness between culture and language. Mayangsari et al. (2018) analyzed grade 8 English textbooks and found a predominance of product and perspective aspects, tailored to address the current students' demands. Setyono and Widodo (2019) studied nationally endorsed EFL textbooks in Indonesia and highlighted the inclusion of intercultural issues, such as resolving conflicts, showing respect for other religious and ethnic groups, peacebuilding, and appreciating cultural artifacts. Other research has shown that incorporating diverse cultural sources enhances students' global cultural awareness (Faris, 2014; Silvia, 2015). Muhsen Al Harbi (2017) characterized English textbooks as essential tools that shape perceptions of both English-speaking cultures and the English language. When English textbooks enriched with cultural content are used in the EFL teaching process, students will internalize the material, helping them achieve the required competencies. Consequently, the cultural elements included in English textbooks and how well they address the cultural teaching needs in language education are critical and intriguing subjects for analysis. Based on these findings, it is evident that developing a comprehensive English textbook requires a well-rounded representation of culture. In relation to this study, cultural understanding ensures that students know how to respond, behave, and communicate appropriately and politely with native speakers and members of the global community from diverse backgrounds. This study highlights how much our education system values the presentation of culture in textbooks. This study also balances three cultural dimensions: the source culture, the target culture of English speakers, and the international culture.

Cortazzi and Jin (1999) highlight the importance of incorporating culturally relevant content from the source, target, and global cultures. Small Culture concentrates on elements of everyday life, such as attitudes, tastes, gestures, and fashions. Meanwhile, Big Culture covers more general topics, including geography, history, literature, and social traditions (Awayed-Bishara, 2015; Doró, 2013; Lee, 2009). Fostering successful communication and intercultural competency requires an understanding of both big and small cultures. It provides EFL learners with the essential skills to interact with various cultural groups. A solid grasp of Big Culture topics, such as education, music, and politics, empowers students to communicate

across different cultural settings. In contrast, knowledge of Little Culture, like everyday practices, holidays, and core values, helps students better navigate routine interactions and appreciate subtle cultural differences (Lee, 2009).

Jing Xiao (2010) Cultural Content of an-use EFL Textbook and Major Students' attitudes and Perceptions toward Culture Learning at Jiangxi University of Science and Technology, China. Teaching culture and developing intercultural communicative competence have become the main concerns for language educators who prepare learners for the challenges of globalization. Therefore, current cultural learning and the cultural content in English textbooks are important issues to analyze. This study analyzed the cultural content in a listening textbook titled *Contemporary College English for Listening 3*. Meanwhile, Erlina, Marzulina, Pitaloka, Astrid, Yansyah, and Mukmini (2018) analyzed the proportions of local and target-language cultures in 10 government English electronic textbooks for junior high school students in Indonesia. The findings from the reading indicated that four textbooks showed a balanced proportion, while six were imbalanced in presenting local and target-language cultures. Additionally, Kasih (2016) analyzed the textbooks in terms of types and the sense of culture. The findings show various results, and the textbooks presented a variety of cultural content that can build students' awareness of cultural issues in English textbooks. In conclusion, the textbook was relatively suitable for introducing the target culture as well as other cultures to learners without neglecting their native culture.

From the research above, the researchers analyzed several cultures contained in several learning books at the university and schools. The research above also presents several perceptions and expectations regarding cultural learning in the classroom, as reflected in textbooks. Therefore, this study focuses on analyzing the types and categories of culture contained in junior high school textbooks. This study used several theories to find cultural content in textbooks. The theories used in this research are Chen (2004) and Lee (2009) for cultural types and Cortazzi & Jin (1999) for cultural categories. This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach and systematically examines cultural themes and content. The data came from three books of the Indonesian junior high school students' Electronic English Textbook: English When English Rings Bell VII, English When English Rings Bell VIII, and English Think Globally Act Locally IX, revised edition (2017), by Kemdikbud RI, 2017. Using content analysis, the researcher seeks to explore the cultural dimensions offered in the textbook and determine the percentage of cultural content. To improve EFL teaching, a noteworthy aspect of this learning process is how culture is portrayed in English textbooks.

METHOD

This study applied a qualitative descriptive design to analyze cultural content and cultural themes. This study used data obtained from the Electronic English Textbooks for junior high school grades 7, 8, and 9, entitled English When English Rings Bell VII, English When English Rings Bell VIII, and English Think Globally Act Locally IX, revised edition (2017) by Kemdikbud RI. The data were collected to determine whether the cultural traits in the textbooks represent the culture-related content contained in junior secondary school English e-textbooks in Indonesia. The data consisted of written content and illustrations accompanying the reading materials. Consequently, the content analysis method was applied in this study for two main purposes: a descriptive purpose (outlining the structure and material of the discourse) and an inferential purpose (establishing the purpose and effect of inferences). The main objectives of this study were to determine the proportion of cultural

content and to examine how culture is presented in Indonesian language textbooks for junior high school students learning EFL. In pursuit of these objectives, using an intercultural perspective on EFL, the researcher located and examined the cultural features and content in the textbooks.

Sample

The materials analyzed in this study consist of a range of textbooks for junior secondary English students in Indonesia. Specifically, the books examined are English when English rings bell VII for the first year, English when English rings bell VIII for the second year, and English when English rings bell IX for the third year of junior high school. Published by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture, these textbooks were chosen for this study because of their extensive usage in senior high schools across Indonesia. In addition, the selection of these three textbooks was informed by junior high school English educators who consistently integrate them into their teaching practices. The junior high school English textbooks consist of 32 chapters. The 'Writing' section consists of activities focused on paragraph composition, emphasizing factual explanations and appropriate word choice and sentence construction. It also incorporates linguistic attributes and tasks, as well as tasks intended for formative evaluation. The 'Reading' section involves pre-reading and post-reading exercises, recognizing key concepts in passages, and comprehending new words. Additionally, it includes activities and exercises for formative evaluation.

Finally, the 'Speaking' section focuses on activities that enhance listening and speaking skills, including expressing preferences, recounting events, sharing cultural knowledge, and giving phrases for different contexts. Like the other elements, this section includes tasks and formative evaluations. The selection of the three textbooks was based on several factors, including their alignment with the Junior High School English Curriculum in Indonesia (2013), which prioritizes the development of writing, reading, and speaking skills. Therefore, these textbooks were considered suitable for this study due to their relevance and widespread use in English classrooms nationwide.

Data Analysis

Cortazzi and Jin's (1999) framework was used to carry out the data analysis in this study. Two viewpoints were considered when analyzing cultural materials for junior high school students in English textbooks. The initial viewpoint examined how the textbooks depicted various cultural origins, while the second examined inconsistencies in how Big Culture was differentiated from Small Culture. To address the analysis, 19 themes were developed to investigate the attributes of Big and Small Culture, based on the cultural views of Chen (2004) and Lee (2009). The themes associated with Big Culture encompass education, science, politics, history, literature/art, social norms, geography, economics, music, architecture, sports, and film. Small Culture included aspects such as gestures/body language, values, food, hobbies, holidays, lifestyle, and customs. Big Culture refers to broader categories, including history, literature/art, politics, economics, geography, education, and science.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

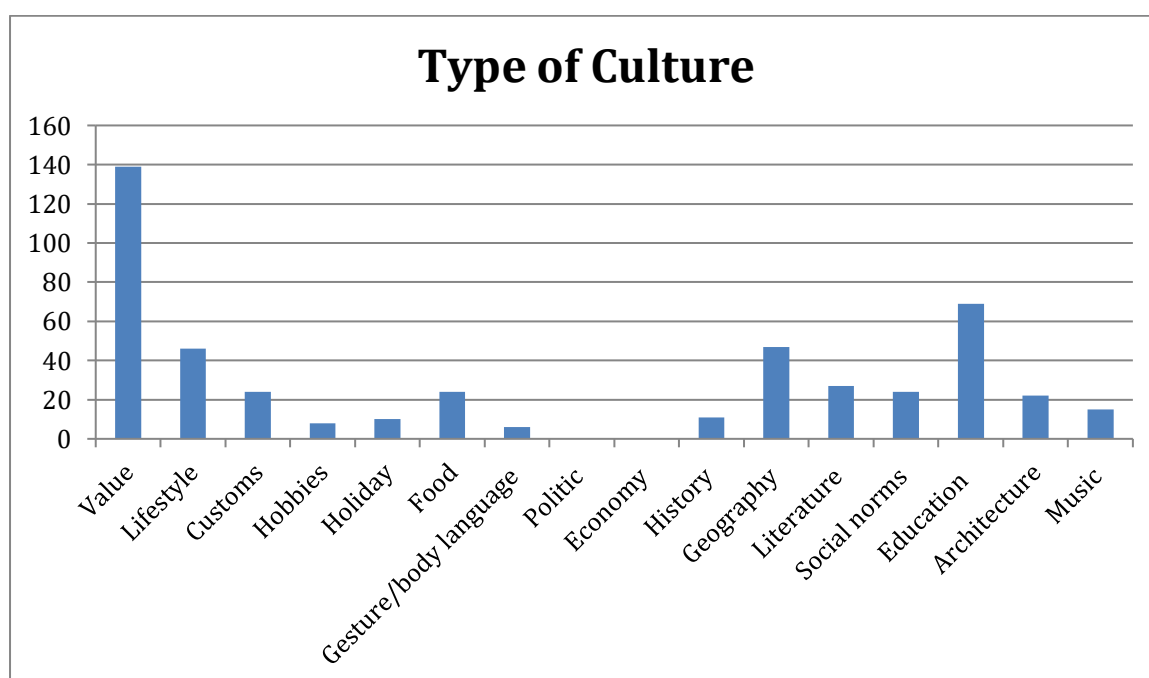
This study aims to investigate how culture is represented in Indonesian English textbooks for junior high school students. The data presented below illustrate the frequency of cultural representations found in English textbooks used for teaching at the junior high school level in Indonesia.

The Percentage of Types of Culture

The 32 chapters of this study were reviewed in more detail for two cultural themes, which are respectively marked with the letters 'Big Culture 'C' and 'Small Culture 'c'. The frequency of occurrence of 19 varied cultural subjects featured in junior high school English textbooks. The Big Culture categories included the following topics: literary/artistic, political, architecture, education, economic, historical, geographical, social norms, and music. Seven different topics are included in the small culture category. Among these subjects are lifestyle, food, customs, gestures/body language, hobbies, values, and holidays. The chart below shows the percentage of major and minor cultures found in junior high school English textbooks.

Table 1

Type of Culture in Textbooks



The Major Cultural Categories included in these topics, and the percentage of each cultural theme as follows: politics (0%), economics (0%), history (11%), geography (47%), literature/art (27%), social norms (24%), education (69%), architecture (22%), music (15%). Seven different topics were included in the small culture category. The percentages for each topic were: values (139%), lifestyle (46%), customs (24%), hobbies (8%), holidays (10%), food (24%), and gestures/body language (6%). The results above were derived from several aspects, namely dialogues: conversations and interactions which are included in each unit as a real-life situation communication, and pictures: all the photographs and images included in each unit.

The Percentage of Culture Categories

In English-language textbooks specifically designed for junior high school students at various educational institutions in Indonesia, cultural references are present. The table below presents the three most important cultural sources: the target culture, the international target culture, and the source culture.

Table 2

Categories of Culture in Textbooks

Book source	Target culture		International culture		Source culture	
	Big c	Small c	Big c	Small c	Big c	Small c
English book for 7th grade	0	17	0	0	0	30
English book for 8th grade	11	13	0	2	5	14
English book for 9th grade	9	0	0	2	0	10
total	20	30		4	5	54
	50%		4%		59%	

In the three books analyzed, there were 3 cultural contents in the Big Culture and 0 cultural contents in the Small Culture. Big Culture accounted for 20%, while Small Culture contributed 30%. In the international cultural target, there were no cultural contents in Big Culture, while the Small Culture included 4 cultural contents, resulting in a total percentage of 4%. Small cultures have a 4% higher percentage than Big Cultures, which score 0%. In the source culture, there are 5 cultural contents in the Big Culture and 59 in the Small Culture. The total percentage is 106%, with Big Cultures at 54% and Small Cultures at 54%. It is known that the source culture constitutes the largest part of the total (59%), but international culture only covers (4%) of the total of all source cultures. With a cultural content percentage of 50%, the target culture has the lowest representation compared to all international target cultures.

In this study, the most widely applied cultural sources in junior high school English textbooks are those that refer to Indonesian culture or student culture. The reason is that most of the information in junior high school English textbooks and student manuals centers on the origins of different cultures. When these themes are integrated into English instruction, students can expand their knowledge beyond the language itself, gaining a richer understanding of the world and its diverse cultures. In this case, English textbooks should also incorporate foreign cultures and global cultural influences to broaden students' horizons and deepen their understanding of world culture.

DISCUSSION

This study examines the depiction of culture in Indonesian language textbooks for junior high school students learning English as a foreign language. The findings indicate that the source culture (Indonesian culture) is the primary focus of junior high school English textbooks, as reflected in the frequency and percentage of culture-related information, whereas the target



culture and the worldwide target culture are disregarded. This situation occurs despite the fact that the target culture is a central component of English language teaching. In light of the findings, English teachers are expected to acquire a better understanding of the importance of cultural learning for foreign language students. Understanding culture is crucial for English learners, as it helps them engage more effectively with speakers of other languages. The results of this study offer valuable insights for English teachers seeking methods to increase students' cultural awareness, such as designing e-modules on different cultures, using film as a medium, and conducting online research. Given the lack of foreign cultural representation in Indonesian English textbooks, it is anticipated that teachers will become more inventive in introducing British culture and American culture to their students. Big Culture themes (History, Education, Politics, Social Norms, Literature and the Arts, and Geography) and Small Culture themes (such as Holidays) dominate the cultural content, with holidays being the most prevalent.

In cases where the textbook's objective is to strengthen students' writing, grammar, reading, and speaking skills through the presentation of Indonesian culture, rather than fostering intercultural understanding, it is likely that the dominance of source culture content, making up nearly fifty percent, is intentional. This results in approximately 50% of the textbook's content being related to Indonesian culture, which serves as the source culture. This conclusion contrasts sharply with that of Liu and Laohawiriyanon (2012), who investigated 61 EFL textbooks currently in use in China (Jiang, 2010; Wu, 2016; Xiao, 2010; Yuen, 2011), Japan (Matsuda, 2002; Yamanaka, 2006), and Korea (Lee, 2009). The target culture and the cultures of English-speaking nations were shown to be significantly promoted by 61 English textbooks utilized for study on English as a foreign language. Considering the previously presented research findings, it appears that Indonesian students may find it challenging to enhance their communication skills when interacting with foreigners, such as students in other countries, because English textbooks in junior high schools do not provide an adequate overview of target and international cultures.

In line with Block (2013), who argues that intercultural competence cannot be achieved without understanding the culture, students learned about the social taboos in Indonesian culture and how to avoid them. Yet, they were not taught how to manage taboos in English interactions. For instance, they learned about cultural taboos in English within Indonesian society and how to navigate them. Similarly, students are instructed to write an invitation letter in English, but they aren't shown how a native English speaker might approach composing one. Therefore, students understand the culture of nearly every country whose mother tongue is English. The study above reveals two surprising patterns: first, the significant presence of 'holidays' in Small Cultures, and second, the missing representation of other key Small Culture themes, such as values, customs, and body language/ gestures. Cunningsworth (Frank, 2013; Gorter & Cenoz, 2011; Xiaole et al., 2012; Liu, 2012), The idea of the “hidden curriculum” suggests that the prominence of “values” in junior high school English textbooks suggests a stronger emphasis on instilling moral principles and fostering character development in students.

Moreover, Alshenqeeti (2019) highlights the crucial role of culture in EFL textbooks and its impact on students' choices in English classes at public universities in Saudi Arabia. Content analysis revealed that the cultural representation was imbalanced, with the content predominantly focused on the target culture. Analysis of the data of this study revealed that the participants viewed the source culture as the least attractive. The research further revealed

that participants focused primarily on skill development and training in target and foreign cultures. A parallel study, "A Variety of Cultures Represented in English Language Textbooks: A Critical Study at Saudi University," was executed by Alsaif (2016). The study indicated that although other outside or developing countries appear marginalized, the Western cultures depicted in the books are mostly from inner-circle countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada. The researcher argued that the existing textbooks in Saudi Arabia are not enough to fulfill students' demands and concerns.

Overall, studies on cultural content in English textbooks highlight the importance of selecting and presenting cultural material appropriately in teaching resources. Textbooks should portray cultures in a well-rounded and diverse way, steering clear of stereotypes or biases that could foster negative perceptions or attitudes towards specific groups. In addition, to foster intercultural communication and understanding, English teachers should be equipped to effectively incorporate cultural content into their teaching, creating an environment that is both supportive and inclusive. Opoku-Amankwa et al. (2011) mentioned that textbooks should go beyond simply delivering knowledge; they must engage students, nurture creativity, foster dynamic learning, and deepen cross-cultural understanding. It is essential that their content be aligned with students and consistent with national education goals (Faris, 2014). Given that culturally centered textbooks support students in developing intercultural communication skills, culture is a cornerstone of textbook content.

Materials related to the target culture have been utilized in English language teaching. The objective of including cultural elements in language lessons is to encourage a more positive mindset towards language proficiency and elevate student interest (McKay & Sandra, 2012). When students see the practical applications of what they are studying, their motivation levels increase. Students can observe how their learning is used in real-world situations when local culture is incorporated into language instruction texts, which can boost motivation and engagement. Second, it is highly advantageous to include aspects of the target culture in language learning resources when teaching 'English as a Foreign Language' (EFL) or 'English as a Second Language' (ESL). Thirdly, gathering information from pupils whose cultures differ from their own is difficult for foreign language instructors (Scarino, 2010).

Consequently, it can be said that culture serves as a powerful motivator for language learners, allowing them to appreciate the commonalities and contrasts among different cultural groups. Teachers ought to be motivated to utilize diverse sources to introduce students to both local and international cultural perspectives.

While information on the origins of 'social standards' is lacking, the understanding of cultural topics (customs, values, and gestures/body language) repeatedly found in textbooks is directly connected to Indonesian history and society. Despite the absence of details on the origins of 'social standards,' for instance, every tenth of November, during Heroes' Day, students are provided with a chapter on the Battle of Surabaya. The teacher asked the students why Heroes' Day is celebrated on this specific date and why it was picked to honor the sacrifices made by our heroes. Afterward, the students talked with their peers and came to an agreement on why this event continues to be memorable.

The absence of other Small Culture topics might contribute to the limited Intercultural communicative skills among Indonesian students. As students must be able to discuss their daily lives to thrive in intercultural communication, 'Small Cultures' have a greater influence

on everyday interactions beyond cultural borders than ‘Big Cultures’ (Liu, 2012; Scarino, 2010).

CONCLUSIONS

This study focuses on analyzing the cultural content in Indonesian-language textbooks for junior high school students. The findings indicate that source-culture content is dominant, while the representation of international and global cultures is significantly lower than that of target culture content. Moreover, Small Culture themes are more prevalent than Big Culture themes throughout the 19 cultural themes outlined. These results highlight an imbalance in the representation of source, target, and international cultures in English textbooks used in Indonesian junior high schools. In response to these findings, textbook developers and educators must prioritize the creation of intercultural spaces within the classroom, promoting the development of students' intercultural competence and ensuring seamless communication between various cultural backgrounds through English as an international language. Given the growing impact of globalization, English textbooks in Indonesia should encourage a broader global understanding and support Indonesian students as they explore educational and career opportunities abroad.

In response to these findings, it is essential that textbook authors and educators cultivate a classroom environment that fosters intercultural competence and allows for effective communication among individuals from diverse backgrounds, with English serving as the global medium of communication. Given the increasing influence of globalization, English textbooks in Indonesia should foster broader global awareness, helping students prepare for opportunities in international education and careers.

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Authorship Contribution Statement

The author is fully responsible for all aspects of the research, including the study's conception and design, data collection, data analysis, interpretation of findings, and manuscript preparation. The author also revised the manuscript and approved the final version for publication.

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