

## The Representation of Indonesian Culture Diversity in English Textbooks Used in High School

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### Abstract

In English language learning, textbooks play a crucial role since they provide knowledge about the English language and interrelated cultures. In Indonesia, the majority of schools are using textbooks which published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia. Therefore, this study aimed to find how the English textbooks for high school represent Indonesian cultural diversity and how does the teacher perceived Indonesian cultural diversity presented in English textbooks. Those three English textbooks were published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia. The design of this study was qualitative study that attempted to reveal the cultural categories in English textbooks. According to Yuen (2011) there are four cultural categories, Product, Person, Practice, and Perspective. In order to answer questions of the study, the researcher did content analysis. Regarding to cultural categories, this study found that in English textbook for 10<sup>th</sup> grade, Product dominated the cultural content with 50% or 78 appearances. Then, in English textbook for 11<sup>th</sup>, Person was the cultural categories that appeared most with 58% or 25 appearances. Lastly, English textbook for 12<sup>th</sup> grade also presented Person as the most cultural categories that appeared with 57% or 54 appearances. On the subject of perception of teacher toward Indonesian cultural diversity presented in English textbooks, this study also found that the teacher thought the cultural content in English textbook which published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia still not enough to represent all Indonesian cultures. However, she agreed that those content are educated enough for the students.

**Keywords:** Culture, Textbook, Cultural Categories, Cultural Representation, Cultural Diversity, Perception of Teacher.

### 1. Introduction

According to Mayangsari et al. (2018) when someone learning a language the most important thing to learn is culture. It is believed that learning a language will be more successful if the culture is included in. This indicates that language and culture could not possibly be separated. In order to make a learning process successful, it needs some important aspects. One of those aspects is textbooks. Textbook is one of the curriculum materials which moderate language learning with prescribed competencies and procedures (Widodo, 2016). As a result, it is impossible to deny that textbooks have considerable positive effects on pupils and help teachers in managing a lesson.

There are some studies concerning on evaluating and identifying cultural aspect in English textbooks. In Indonesia, there is a research from Parlindungan et al. (2018) also investigated the cultural elements in middle school English textbooks in Indonesia. The results showed that the Indonesian English textbooks, '*When English Rings a Bell*' (2014) for Seventh and Eighth grade adopt a local approach to ELT materials. Additionally, in 2020, Ayu evaluated the cultural content on English textbook used by EFL students in Indonesia. The findings also showed that English textbooks made by Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesian for tenth graders did not reveal much on the cultural content of source culture and only a small cultural content of target culture. The target culture was simply utilized to

make a comparison with English because Indonesia is made up of varied cultures and that they still did not recognize their own.

Based on the number of the studies talking about the cultural representation in the English textbooks in Indonesia, it revealed that this study is an interesting topic. It is important to examine the representation of the cultural content in the textbooks, so it can create awareness of the importance of culture in language teaching among people who involve in education field. However, those studies are still lacked the perception of teacher about Indonesian cultural diversity on the textbooks.

## 2. Literature Review

Culture can be described in a different ways. According to Chodhury (2014) culture describes as the qualities of a group of people, including language, religion, food, social behaviors, music, and the arts. The behaviors and thoughts of people are often influenced by their own cultures, regardless of where they live. Farzaneh et al. (2014) also defined culture as a framework for organizing human relationships' thoughts, emotions, and interactions. It can be concluded that culture refers to the thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, and habits that are exchanged, learnt, and accepted in a society. Culture from one group or society may vary from that others. As a result, culture distinguishes a person from other societies. This research aims to discover the thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, and habits of a community in society that are represented in English textbooks, which is related to this study.

According to Hall (2005) representation is the ability to describe or visualize something. Culture is always developed through meaning and language, which is why representation is so crucial. In this case language is the most commonly utilized medium for representation. On the other hand, language cannot achieve this goal on its own, so it requires the assistance of people and culture. Hall (2003) also stated that image can be used to symbolize various things in language. The most common image used by the media is a picture since sometimes people can express their thoughts more simply with a picture than they can with words or sentences.

Cultural diversity refers to the reality of human people coexisting with a diverse of knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, religions, languages, abilities and disabilities, genders, ethnicities, races, nationalities, sexual orientations, and so on (Lin, 2020). It also encompasses how people react to this reality and how they choose to live in harmony with it.

### Cultural Categories

According to Yuen (2011), there are some cultural categories that can be seen, which are, products, persons, practices, and perspectives.

a) **Product**, it refers to physical things, including things which manufactured by humans that are associated with a specific culture (e.g. places, historical sites, songs, folklores, books, traditional foods, traditional clothes, traditional houses, traditional weapon, etc.)

b) **Person**, it refers to figures, characters, or famous people (e.g. singer, poets, writers, national figures, artist, heroes, etc.)

c) **Practice**, it refers to activities, rituals, and cultural practices which refer to certain culture (e.g. holiday, celebrations, ceremonies, passed tradition, etc.)

d) **Perspective**, it refers to viewpoint of a certain group of people which make them different from other culture (e.g. local people consider that giving a present to teacher is unprofessional)

### **English Textbooks**

According to Brown (2001) textbook is a book that is used in an educational setting. It also claims that textbook is the most comprehensible and common form of support material for language teaching. In line with Richards (2019) stated that textbook is an important part of language programs because they provide the majority of language information (language input) for both language learning and classroom practice. It can be concluded that textbook can be described as a source and a guide for teachers and students to assist them in the teaching and learning process. Textbook is one of the most essential components of teaching and learning. As Cunningsworth stated in 1995 that textbooks are an important resource for self-directed learning, presentation content, a source of ideas and activities, a source of information for students, a syllabus that reflects pre-determined learning goals, and help for inexperienced teachers who are still building trust.

### **The Perception of Teacher**

According to Devito (1997) perception is the process when we become aware of a large number of stimuli that have an impact on our senses. Additionally Sobur (2009) stated that perception is part of the whole process that causes the reaction after a stimulus is applied to humans. It can be inferred that perception is defined as the ability of the total process of stimuli to produce a reaction, and we become aware of something after seeing and understand it.

## **3. Method**

The purpose of this study is to figure out how Indonesian culture is represented in English textbooks used in high school and to discover the perception of teacher towards Indonesian cultural diversity represented in English textbooks used in high school. In order to discover the representation of Indonesian cultural in English textbooks, this study examines four cultural aspects, which are products, persons, practices, and perspectives. Those cultural aspects were represented through the written texts and images in the English textbooks.

The research method in this study is qualitative research, specifically qualitative content analysis, because data in this study are dealt with number of words and pictures. This study examined the quality of Indonesian cultural representation in English textbooks for grades 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> from curriculum 2013 published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia.

### **Data and Source of Data**

This study had two sources of data. The first one is from English textbooks used in high school, specifically for grades 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> from curriculum 2013. The textbooks for grades 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> were written by Utami Widiati, Zuliati Rahmah, and Furaidah. Meanwhile, the textbook for grades 11<sup>th</sup> were written by Mahrukh Basir. However, all of those textbooks were published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia. The data in this study were focused on texts, images, and tasks that contain cultural issues. The other data are from the perception of English high school teacher which gathered through the interview.

### **Instruments**

In this study, the researcher used one checklist and one interview protocol as the instruments to collect the data. The first instrument is checklist which proposed by Yuen

(2011), this instrument is to find out how Indonesian cultures being represented in these English textbooks.

Table 3.1 The Example of Instrument Checklist for Yuen (2011)

Items	Products	Persons	Practices	Perspectives
Chapter 1				
Chapter 2				
Chapter 3				
Chapter 4				
Chapter 5				

The second instrument is interview protocol which designed by the researcher herself, it is to find out the perception of teacher towards Indonesian cultural issues that represented in English textbooks. This interview protocol was designed according to the steps and tips proposed by Jacob and Furgerson (2012). The interview protocol was conducted with a mother tongue of the teacher which is Indonesian to allow the freedom of expressions (Creswell, 2013).

Table 3.2 Interview Protocol for Teacher

No.	Questions for Interview
1.	Menurut anda, apa definisi dari keberagaman budaya Indonesia?
2.	Konten budaya Indonesia apa saja yang sering anda lihat pada buku teks Bahasa Inggris di SMA?
3.	Apakah representasi budaya Indonesia pada buku teks Bahasa Inggris sudah cukup mendidik bagi siswa SMA?
4.	Apakah buku teks Bahasa Inggris pada SMA sudah cukup menunjukkan keberagaman budaya Indonesia?
5.	Menurut pendapat Anda, apa keuntungan dari keberagaman budaya Indonesia yang ada pada buku teks Bahasa Inggris?

## Data Collection

There are two techniques that utilized in collecting the data in this research, they are:

### 1. Documentation

#### 1) Preparing the data

The first step in collecting the data is the researcher has to prepare textbooks which appropriate with the title of this research as the data. In this case, the researcher chooses English textbooks because the researcher is studying in English major.

#### 2) Determining the data

In order to determine the data, the researcher focused on English textbooks used in high school as the criteria in collecting the data. The researcher also decide to take choice of English textbooks which published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia.

### 3) Selecting the data

In this study, the researcher collected the data by selecting the reading passages, dialogues, pictures, and activities which presented in each unit of the textbooks. The researcher used the checklist instrument from expert which is Yuen (2011) to collect the data.

In this process, the researcher read all contents of the textbooks. Then, the data with cultural content were marked and listed based on theory from Yuen (2011). It consists of four categories, which are products, persons, practices, and perspectives. The codes that used for Yuen's cultural categories are:

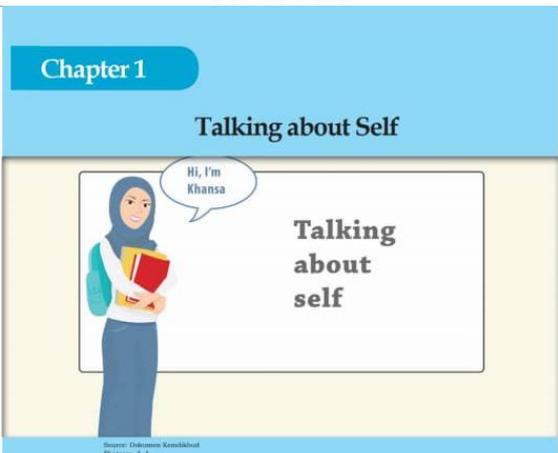
P1 : Products

P2 : Persons

P3 : Practices

P4 : Perspectives

Table 3.3 The Example of Cultural Categories Coding

Data	Code
<p style="text-align: center;">Picture 1.1</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">X/001/CH.01/P.01/P1</p>

Note:

X : code of textbooks

001 : number of data

CH.01 : number of chapter

P.01 : number of page

P1 : code of cultural category

## 2. Interview

In this study, the researcher used a semi-structured interview because the researcher come up with some questions, however the researcher can also ask follow-up questions to get more information or explanation from the respondent based on their response.

The researcher gathered the data by giving the respondent some questions about their perception toward the representation of Indonesian cultural diversity in English textbooks used for high school. The participant in this study is one English teacher of SMAN 2 Loa Kulu. The reason why the researcher chooses the teacher of SMAN 2 Loa Kulu is because she is the only one English teacher in that school. However, the researcher gave the teacher a concern form to know whether she is willing to be a respondent or not. The researcher recorded the interview process, and then the interview data were transcribed into sentences.

### Data Analysis

In this study, the researcher used a technique of data analysis which proposed by Miles et al. (2014) which is involving three steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

#### 1. Data Reduction

In this first step, the researcher showed the process of evaluating data by selecting, focusing, simplifying, and transforming the data. After that, all of data were filtered to ensure that only the relevant data were record. The purpose of this step is to eliminate redundant data and make the data easier to represent. The data which not related to how Indonesian cultures being represented in English textbooks and how does the teacher perceived Indonesian cultural diversity presented in English textbooks were separated.

#### 2. Data Display

In this step, the data which come from documentation were presented with its explanation.

Table 3.4 The example of data display for documentation

Data	Code	Explanation
Picture 1.1 	X/001/CH.01/P.01/P1	The uniform which the student wears is a common uniform for high school student in Indonesia.

The data presented along with its explanations were used to calculate the percentage in cultural categories. Then, the sum was converted to a percentage. After that, the researcher calculated how many times each code appears. All of those percentages became the foundation for drawing conclusions.

#### 3. Conclusion Drawing

In this last step, the percentage of the data was narrated and the questions of the study were answered. The data with the highest and lowest percentages were used to form conclusions.

### Triangulation

In this study, the researcher used data triangulation, because the researcher used two sources of data which are from English textbooks and also from the teacher's perspectives. The credibility of this study is established through consultation with experts, advisors, and colleagues. Besides, the researcher also used previous studies in examining the questions of

the study. In order to examine the cultural categories, the researcher used the framework from Yuen (2011).

#### 4. Result

##### **Indonesian Cultures in English Textbooks**

One of the most prominent cultural categories that represented in these three textbooks is product. Therefore, one of the reasons why product can be recognized in many forms is because Indonesia is a great country. Thus, those three textbooks mentioned almost cities from Java, Sumatra, Sulawesi, Kalimantan, Bali, Papua, and Nusa Tenggara Timur. But still, the most city that mentioned in the textbook are from Java Island. This one possibly happened because all of the authors are from Java Island.

Then, the researcher also found a uniform as product in the textbooks which illustrated with white shirt and grey pants or skirt. However, it can be seen that some of the pictures showed a student which also wear a *hijab* or the Islamic veil. It can be assumed that the reason why the author made it because according to the data from Civil Registry Service Office (Disdukcapil) the majority religion in Indonesia is Islam.

Next, as previously mentioned that traditional house is one of the examples from product. Therefore, according to Forshee (2006) in Parlindungan et al. (2018) traditional houses from Indonesia (as seen in picture 13.1 and 13.3) have specific meanings. He stated that their construction, design, ceremonies, building materials, divisions, and location demand careful attention to Adat (customary law), ancestral procedure, and local beliefs in spirits. For example, this textbook mentioned traditional house from West Sumatra namely Rumah Gadang and it can be seen through picture 13.1 and 13.3. The upward arching roofs represent paired buffalo horns which has a meaning as a symbol of form of respect for the buffalo that has helped the Minangkabau people in winning the buffalo match. Buffalo also correspond with Minangkabau's philosophy "the winning water buffalo", because the buffalo are animals that can survive or rarely get sick at natural conditions in the Minangkabau region. The author chose this as the representation of traditional house possibly because it has good values.

#### 5. Discussion

As we know that Indonesia also has a lot of endemic animals that very unique in each region. However, according to the data from The Statistical Center (BPS) there are 15 endemic animals which in the rate category, including Orangutan, Bekantan, Sumatran Tiger, and Sumatran Elephant which mentioned in the textbooks. Thus, it can be assumed that the reason why the authors mentioned those animals as product category is because they are endangered and the authors want the students to be more aware of the animals.

Next, in the second cultural category which is person, the researcher found that the person names which the authors presented in the textbooks can reflect a particular geographical location, such as Wayan, Made and Nyoman which are a Balinese name. There are also Javanese names such as Bejo, Slamet, Jono and Bayu or Situmorang which is a Batakese name. The authors presented those names possibly because they are lived in Java Island. For Balinese names possibly because Bali is well known for its tourist sites, hence people may familiar with those names.

The authors also presented some of former presidents of Indonesia as person category. However, from seven presidents that Indonesia ever had, the authors only mentioned four of them which are Soekarno, Soeharto, B.J. Habibie and Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. This may be because they have a fascinating history to tell. For example, Soekarno who is well-known as the founding Father of Indonesia and also the first president. Meanwhile, Soeharto is the president with the longest presidency in Indonesia and to be called as the Father of Development. B.J. Habibie is one of the geniuses that Indonesia ever had. That is why he's

been called as the Father of Technology for his brilliance with IQ 200. The singers that the author mentioned are also a famous and have a great talent. Anggun and Agnes Mo were well-known as Indonesian singers which succeed to go-international. Afgan also have so much talent which explained before in the form of text. The representation of these talented singers can be an inspiration as well as a motivation for students for pursue their dreams.

The third category is practice which also appeared in the textbooks, though it is in lesser numbers than product and person. This one can be identified by the presence of historical event and conference. In fact, there is a specific text that talking about Heroes Day in Indonesia on textbook for 10<sup>th</sup> grades specifically on chapter 9 entitled “The Battle of Surabaya”. This text specifically aims to engage students with knowledge about history of Indonesia. The event on that history then became a practice for Indonesian which is National Heroes Day.

Then, the last cultural category that appeared in the textbooks is perspective which can be recognized from students’ behavior toward teacher, gender activities, gender roles, and the living of Indonesian tribes. From the textbook for 10<sup>th</sup> grade, the researcher found that in Indonesia student greeting their teacher first. As Forshee (2006) stated in Parlindungan et al. (2018) “Indonesian etiquette entails a formal politeness to others that requires deference...kin and elders enjoy respect...” (p. 44). It means that Indonesian hold the idea that younger people should respect older ones. The textbooks also showed some gender activities and roles which can be seen different between men and women. It presented that men mostly do outdoor activities like fishing, while women mostly do indoor activities like baking. Women also described to do more chores than men. Thus, it can be conclude that Indonesia still lacked in gender equality. Regarding to the living of Indonesian tribes, the author represent some of Indonesian tribes which still live far from modernity and advanced technology. It is undeniable because Indonesian has a lot of tribes and ethnic groups.

### **The Distribution of Indonesian Culture in English Textbooks**

From the total occurrences of those three textbooks, it can be seen that there is unequal distribution from one category to others. Product and person have the highest occurrences in comparison to practices and perspectives. Similarly, this finding support Samsudin’s (2019) study that product (clothes, cities, animals, etc.) and person (person names, authors, former presidents, etc.) are the most appeared once, followed by practice (historical event and conference) and perspective (students’ behavior toward teacher, gender activities, gender roles, and the living of Indonesian tribes).

Based on those findings, it can be concluded that the authors of the textbooks are more concerned with product and person instead of practice and perspective. This one is possibly because the authors want to make students more interested in English learning because of the discussion about product and person which according to Yuen (2011) it was related to entertainment. Therefore, the learning process will be more pleasure.

### **The Perception of Teacher toward Indonesian Cultural Diversity Presented in English Textbooks**

Regarding to the research question number two which referred to the perception of teacher toward Indonesian cultural diversity presented in English textbooks used in high school. The result of the interview section showed that the respondent which is English teacher of high school has very good understanding on Indonesian cultural diversity in English textbooks used in high school. It can be seen from the way she responds to each of statements in interview section.

The teacher stated that cultural diversity is the number of different cultures in a particular area, region or country which has its uniqueness. However, the interviewee mentioned the

lacked of Indonesian culture in the textbooks which published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia. Those textbooks only mentioned Indonesian culture that already famous, such as cities like Jakarta and Surabaya, tourist sites like Mount Bromo and Raja Ampat, and etc. This is parallel to Parlindungan et al. (2018) and Wahyuni et al. (2018) notion that there is still a shortage of local cultural material in English textbooks which published by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia.

Furthermore, the teacher perceived that the content in the textbooks is already educated enough for high school students. The teacher also shared her opinion about the advantages of bringing Indonesian culture into English textbooks. The interviewee stated that it is good because it can make students more aware toward their culture and also make them conserved the culture of Indonesia. However, the interviewee also considered the disadvantage which is a lack of students' knowledge about foreign culture.

The research showed that the teacher had positive perception on Indonesian cultural diversity in English textbooks used in high school. The teacher's perception on those textbooks in line with Parlindungan et al (2018) and Ayu (2020) that the textbooks should represent much on the Indonesian culture. Furthermore, the perception of teacher was heavily influenced by their personalities and cultural background. Her personality was shaped by her previous experiences, motivations and situation. It is in line with Rakhmat (2009) that perception is influenced by variety of elements, including personal characteristics, structural factor, and cultural factor in which individual lives.

## 6. Conclusion

After the analysis, the researcher would like to bring the findings to a conclusion. First aspect is the finding of how Indonesian cultures represented in English textbooks used in high school. The cultural categories are divided into product, person, practice, and perspective. Product refers to physical things, including things which manufactured by humans that are associated with a specific culture. The second one is person which refers to figures, characters, or famous people. On the other hand, practice refers to activities, rituals, and cultural practices which refer to certain culture. The last category is perspective which refers to viewpoint of a certain group of people which make them different from other culture.

The analysis of the textbook has revealed some points. First, it can be seen that cultural categories in the textbook is lack of proportion. In *Bahasa Inggris* for 10<sup>th</sup> grade the data presented the domination of product compared to the person, practice, and perspective aspect. The percentage of product found after analysis is 50% or 78 appearances. Meanwhile, practice became the least cultural category that appeared in this textbook with 1% or 2 appearances only. This predominant appearance of product was similar with the study conducted by Samsudin (2019) and Ayu (2020).

On the other hand, the finding of *Bahasa Inggris* for 11<sup>th</sup> grade and *Bahasa Inggris* for 12<sup>th</sup> grade are quite similar. They both had person as their most predominant cultural categories. However, these textbooks are also lack on the proportion of cultural categories. The percentage of person in *Bahasa Inggris* for 11<sup>th</sup> grade was 58% or 25 appearances, meanwhile in *Bahasa Inggris* for 12<sup>th</sup> grade was 57% or 54 appearances outranking other categories of culture. The least cultural category that appeared in these two textbooks also same, that is practice aspect. In *Bahasa Inggris* for 11<sup>th</sup> grade and *Bahasa Inggris* for 12<sup>th</sup> grade, practice only appeared once.

Unfortunately, from the findings above it can be conclude that those three textbooks did not expose much on the practice and perspective aspect, especially on practice one. Moreover, the forms of Indonesian cultural diversity that the authors represent on those three textbooks include words, sentences, and pictures.

The second aspect is to discover how teacher's perception towards Indonesian cultural diversity in English textbooks used high school. The data analysis result shows that the teacher has very good understanding toward it. It is proved by how she responds to each of statements in interview section. The teacher shared that she realize there is still lacked of Indonesian culture in the textbooks, but the content is already educated enough for high school students. Additionally, the teacher also stated that Indonesian culture should appear more in the textbook so the student will aware to their own culture.

## 7. Suggestion

Based on the results, discussion, and conclusion of this research, first, it is suggested that the author of English textbook should include Indonesian culture more often than foreign culture. It is highly recommended that Indonesian culture should be included more than present results. Indonesian culture is aimed at making students aware to their own culture. Then, the author should also update the references. For example, adding more popular places in Indonesia, much better if it is from the outside of Java Island. Then, for the public figures it can be more varied besides singer, such as politician or entrepreneur. If the author still wants to present a singer, then it is best to present the current singer which familiar with this generation. Another suggestion for the author of English textbook is they should also present the minority groups in Indonesia. Thus, the cultural content would be more varied. Furthermore, the students would be accustomed with other cultures in Indonesia. By doing this, those textbooks will not be lacked of Indonesian culture anymore. The teachers should also choose good textbooks with care. By knowing the three cultural categories, the teacher can introduce and gained cultural awareness toward the students.

Finally, the findings of this research can be used as the foundation for future research under the same topic. This research may have some weaknesses, so it is possible to investigate other similar research with different amount, levels, and publishers of English textbooks and also other theories of cultural categories from other experts.

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