Cultural Content: An Analysis of EFL Textbook in Indonesia

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Abstract

Culture is the important thing that must be learned when ones want to learn language. It is believed that learning language will be successful when the culture is included. This means that both could not be separated. Due to these cases, the student needs a cross cultural understanding as be an intercultural competent. Then, one thing that can be done to learn both language and culture is that by inserting the cultural values in textbooks. This study aims to investigate how culture was employed in English textbooks, which is used for 8th grade students in Indonesia. The study explored the cultural dimensions in the textbook. In order to analyze the textbook, descriptive content analysis was be used. The result showed that this textbook has been dominated by products and perspectives dimensions. Practices, communities and persons dimensions have the less intention in this book. Then, the suggestions are provided with the expectations of developing the textbook which meet up with the students' need in this era.

Keywords: cultural content, intercultural competence, language and culture, textbook evaluation.

Introduction

Nowadays, English has spread around the world extensively and developed as an international language for economic, social and technological purposes. The English speakers grow and spread quickly. The number of English speakers is more than the number of native ones. Byram (1997) mentions the development of linguistic competence cannot promise successful communication, and misunderstandings often happen among interlocutors from different cultural backgrounds. In other words, learners of English should not be expected to internalize cultural norms of native speakers. Instead, they are encouraged to be equipped with both communicative competence and intercultural competence for efficient intercultural communication. Therefore, in learning a language the students not only learn the culture of target language but also learn their own cultures and other culture using the target language they have learnt. Inputting source culture and target culture in EFL textbook can be helpful for the students to see the difference two cultures and make cross-cultural understanding analysis (Arslan, 2016).

Moreover, learning culture is not only focus on the origin of the culture itself, but we also learn the aspects of the culture. William (1983) in Zarei and Khalessi (2011) defines culture includes assumed to comprise ideas about what in life seems important (value) such as entertainment, liberal, consumerism, and inculcation of Western values; how people will behave in various situations (norms) such as girlfriend-boyfriend relationship, opposite sex contact or dating, pet-keeping, and club-dancing; the structures of a society (e.g. organizations) through which values and norms (institutions) such as entertainment, commercial, sports, educational, and conventional institutions; and the things or aspects of material culture, derived from a culture's values and norms (artefacts) such as occupation, clothes, name, music, sport, art, celebrity, food, instrument, and education.

Similar to William, Moran (2001) defines culture as the evolving way of life of a group of persons, consisting of a shared set of practices associated with a shared set of products, based upon a shared set of perspectives on the world, and set within specific social contexts. Moran (2001) divides the culture into five dimensions of cultural aspects as follows:

a. Products

This dimension includes four aspects namely artefacts (food, document, language, money, tool), places (buildings, cities, houses), institutions (family, low, economy, religion, education, politic), art forms (music, clothes, dancing painting, movie, architecture).

b. Practices

Practices involve acts (ritualized communicative practices), scenarios (extended communicative practice), lives (stories of the member of the future).

c. Perspectives

This dimension represents the perceptions, beliefs, values, and attitudes that underlie the products and guide people's behavior in the practice of culture. They can be explicit but often implicit, outside conscious awareness.

d. Communities

Communities include specific social contexts such as national culture, circumstances (e.g. religious ceremonies), and group (e.g. different social clubs) in which members carry out cultural practices.

e. Persons

Person dimension refers to individual members who embody the culture and its communities in unique ways. Personal identity and life history play key roles in the development of a cultural person.

The idea of embedding various dimensions of culture intends to make the students speak English culturally acceptable and appropriate with the context of the interaction. In addition, Zarei and Khalessai (2011) analyzed cultural load in English language textbooks entitled 'Interchange Series'. They found that the cultural value's aspect in this book included entertainment, liberal, consumerism, and inculcation of Western values. The norm's aspect included girlfriend-boyfriend relationship, opposite sex contact or dating, petkeeping, and club-dancing'. The institution's aspects involved entertainment, commercial, sports, educational, and conventional institutions. The artefact's aspects included 'occupation, clothes, name, music, sport, art, celebrity, food, instrument, and education. Moreover, Razi (2012) defined culture into 45 elements. From those elements he divided into nine categories as followed:

- a. Intellectual values: though, habits, beliefs, traditional values, etiquette, ethnics, and ideas.
- b. Lifestyles: unique dances, unique jewelry, hobbies, particular skill, unique tools, dressing habits, food and games.
- c. Behaviors: non-verbal behaviors patterns, verbal behaviors patterns, other behavior patterns, means of communication, and reactions to particular situations.
- d. Media: television shows, news broadcast, popular websites, advertising, scientific/technological accomplishments, and printed materials (newspaper and magazines.
- e. Artistic values: music, cinema, art and literature.
- f. Family: family life, taboos, relationship and daily life.
- g. Minor values: public holiday, weather conditions, traffic rules, and travel habits.
- h. Major values: history, geography, and philosophy.
- i. Formal values: legal system, politics, and the economy.

Based on Choudhury (2014) culture is the characteristics of a particular group of people, defined by everything from language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts. In line with Farzaneh et al (2014) said that culture is a framework for organizing thoughts, emotions, and behavior in human interactions. In addition, culture is related to the places, names, practices such as eating habit, table manner, behave, and celebration (Durmaz, 2017). From these experts' opinions, it can be concluded that culture is everything about the people life including what they do, what they produce, and what they think in the social contexts. Then, language is part of culture and used as tool of communication to reflect their cultures. From the experts' opinion above, it can be concluded that the experts have similar aspects in categorizing the culture. The researcher decided to adapt it in 16 aspects into the following construct table:

Table 1. The constructs of cultural dimensions

No.	Culture	Aspects
	Dimension	
1	Products	Artefacts: name, food, document, language, money, tool, good/things, jewelry and hobby
		Places: buildings, cities, houses.
		Institutions: family, law, economy, religion, education, politic, occupation, media, entertainment
		and conventional institutions.
		Art forms: instrument, music, clothes, dancing, painting, movie, literature and architecture.
2	Practices	Operation: manipulation of cultural products, how to use or make the product of culture.
		Acts: ritualized communicative practices such as eating habit, table manner, behave, and
		celebration.
		Scenario: extended communicative practices
		Lives: stories of culture's members
3	Perspective	Intellectual values: though, habits, perceptions, beliefs, traditional values, etiquette, attitudes,

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		ethnics, and ideas.
		Behaviors: non-verbal behaviors patterns, verbal behaviors patterns, other behavior patterns,
		means of communication, and reactions to particular situations.
		Minor values: public holiday, weather conditions, traffic rules, and travel habits.
		Major values: history, geography, and philosophy.
		Formal values: legal system, politics, and the economy.
4	Communities	Specific social contexts such as national culture, circumstances (e.g. religious ceremonies), and
		group (e.g. different social clubs, organization) in which members carry out cultural practices.
5	Persons	Personal identity and life history.

In contexts where there is no immediate access to the target culture, teachers and the materials being used to play a significant role in supplying cultural information. In addition to teachers and realia textbooks can also play a crucial role in supplying students with rich cultural information. According to Tavares and Cavalcanti (1996) in Yeganeh and Raeesi (2015), the aim of teaching culture is to heighten students' awareness and to develop their curiosity towards both the target and home culture. A textbook is an appropriate media to share the cultural values. It is the foremost references and resources in the education system (Shahmohammadi, 2013; Arik and Kezer, 2010). Without the textbook, teachers also could not transfer their knowledge to students successfully since most of language inputs are provided there (Arik and Kezer, 2010). Additionally, Richards (2002) states that a textbook could assist teachers with limited teaching experiences for it has already covered a syllabus design, standardized instruction, variety learning resources, effective language models and input. Textbooks are commodities, political objects, and cultural representations and, therefore, are the site and result of struggles and compromise in order to determine how and by whom they will be produced, how and by whom their contents will be selected, how and to whom they will be distributed, and how teachers and students will make use of them (Shannon, 2010).

Textbooks are undoubtly the most popular teaching materials and media used in foreign language classes for many years. It also has been as one of effective sources for both teacher who is designing a course and learners as persons who are acquiring the languages in teaching and learning process. From the statement above, it cannot be denied that the textbooks have significant positive effects for the students and help the teachers in managing a lesson. According to Bojanic and Topalov (2016), the aim of the textbooks is providing the learners with necessary knowledge, language skills, and information English speaking countries and preparing them for interactions with people from foreign countries and different cultural backgrounds.

In teaching language, the textbooks help both the students and the teachers to learn together. It is supported by Nordlund (2016) who states that the textbooks be of high quality and helpful in the acquisition of the new language. The textbooks, as a tool used to achieve teaching and learning goal, help the learners to acquire a vocabulary because the textbooks generally contain many kinds of texts, class activities, as well as different kinds of tests, and additional materials to give the students deepen their understanding. Additionally, by using a textbook, the teachers will cover all things which is required in national curriculum and syllabi. Thus, the teachers can learn more about what they should teach according to the national curriculum and standardized syllabi. They can also plan the teaching for a whole semester or maybe even for a whole academic year with complete sets of teaching materials.

The textbooks facilitate the teacher and the students in many ways but still have some weaknesses. As stated by Gak (2011), it is important to realize and emphasize that there are no textbooks that fit perfectly for every language program. Thus, there are no ideal textbooks, ideal for every teacher, ideal for every group of learners, and ideal in every teaching situation. Consequently, the teachers are required to adapt and modify the textbooks to fit actual needs of learners' groups and culture. It will give an approach to the learners and help them closer to the context. As a result, they would feel that their needs are respected and they would feel much more motivated to successfully finish the course (Graves, 2000).

In some situations, the textbooks serve as the basis for much of the language input leaners receives and the language practice that occurs in the classroom. They may provide the basis for the content of the lessons, the balance skills taught and the kinds of language practice the students take part in. The textbooks may serve to supplement the teacher's instruction for leaners. Those may provide the major source of contact they have with the language apart from input provided by teachers. An Indonesian educational system also requires students to have a textbook. The government provides the textbook for all subjects. Every student gets one textbook for every subject. Several schools provide it for free. The rest is asking the students to buy it by themselves. In this case, an English subject also takes part since it is one of compulsory subjects which students must learn.

Teaching a foreign language is not only teaching the students to develop their linguistics and communicative competence in the target language but also to improve the knowledge of the target culture. McKay (2004) and Kachru (1986) in Zarei and Khalessi (2011) suggest that English as an International Language needs to describe one's own culture and concerns to others rather than being linked to the culture of those who speak it. Hence, for many decades, foreign language teaching has been dominated by the principle that the teachers should use only the target language (TL) and avoid using the mother tongue (L1) except as a last resort. However, reports show that the teachers make extensive use of the L1. This paper illustrates this discrepancy and considers some main reasons for it. It suggests a framework of principles for balancing L1 and TL use in the classroom. Finally, it reviews some strategies available to teachers who wish to make maximal use of the TL without denying the potential of the L1 to support foreign language learning.

The studies of cultures in English language teaching have already conducted several researchers. Tuna and Razi (2001) conducted a research about the integration of cultures in ELT classes. Their result showed that both pre - service and in - service teachers had considered a wide range of cultures elements integrated into language teaching to enable the development of intercultural skills. Furthermore, Beresova (2015) studied the effect of authentic materials to improve language acquisition and cultural awareness. She hypothesised that authentic materials enabled to improve language acquisition and cultural awareness more significantly than pedagogically modified materials. She added that literary and journalistic materials were used as effective teaching materials for providing cultural and linguistic. Moreover, Farzaneh, et al (2014) also analysed socio-cultural contexts in Top Notch Series. The result showed that the intercultural content of the Series was understandable and positively evaluated. The lack of these books included no objectives in the beginning and no clear consensus regarding the cultural awareness component. In addition, Mukhamirudin et al (2017) also did the evaluation of cultural-related content in Indonesian English textbooks for high school students. The findings indicated the imbalances of those two aspects (culture dimensions and culture categories), especially the fact that the textbooks are biased to certain culture or countries is not in line with today's paradigm of English teaching. Obviously, culture is the expression of the values and beliefs of a community (Corbett, 2010). The way of writer insert culture in a textbook will be interesting to be analyzed. It is one way to communicate to the readers about culture through textbook. Furthermore, in his book Corbett also wrote that exploration of language and culture is, at heart, a search for meaning. Meaning can obviously be communicated via spoken or written language, in variety of genres (Corbett, 2010). One of the genre that he mentioned is about book. By analyzing cultural in a textbook, it is hoped that it can be a safe space for engagement with differences in belief and ideology, not so that some false consensus can be imposed, but in order to promote genuine understanding and respect as it stated by Corbett (2010).

In learning language, we also learn the culture in order to have a good communication. Integrating culture in teaching language is a need to improve the student's intercultural competence. The teaching material/textbook which integrates culture and language well is needed. The cultural aspects are needed to be included in English learning materials to support the students understanding when learning the target language. Regarding to the issue of intercultural competence, a good English textbook should expose the cultural content which. However, the presence of cultural materials are still questionable. Therefore, the analyzing English textbook related to cultural content is needed. In analyzing English textbook the researcher adapts Moran's theories and add some theories from other experts which are relevant. It consists of cultural dimension includes products, practices, perspectives, communities and persons dimensions. The inquiry question for this paper is:

How cultural dimensions are applied in English textbook entitled Bahasa Inggris "When English Rings a Bell" for Grade eight?

Research Methodology

Content analysis is a textbook evaluation which is belonged to the descriptive qualitative research. It reveals the cultural contents of English textbook used by grade eight in junior high school and how they are represented. According to Karasar (2006), content analysis is study to develop the quantification criteria in advance and examines the material such as text, book, document etc. according to some specific expectations. It means that in content analysis, the researcher evaluates text, book or other documents based on the specific criteria. According to Shahmohammadi (2013), content analysis is a research tool to determine the presence of certain words, concepts, themes, phrases, characters, or sentences within texts or sets of texts and to quantify this presence in an objective manner. He said that to conduct a content analysis on a text, the text is coded or broken down, into manageable categories on a variety of levels word, word sense, phrase, sentence, or theme and then examined them. It means in this research, the text or word in the book or document should be analyzed or categorized according the criteria are going to study.

In this research, the text and picture in EFL textbook "Bahasa Inggris When English Rings a Bell for Grade Eight" will be analyzed using cultural dimension (products, practices, perspectives, communities and persons from Moran which has been adapted). This textbook is the second revised edition of Bahasa Inggris "When English Ring a Bell" for Grade Eight. It is developed by

Indonesian Minister of Education and Culture in 2014 and revised in 2017. This textbook was chosen because it is expected to be used as the guidance book by the teachers and students in teaching and learning process nationally.

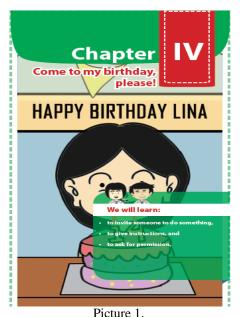
Findings and Interpretation

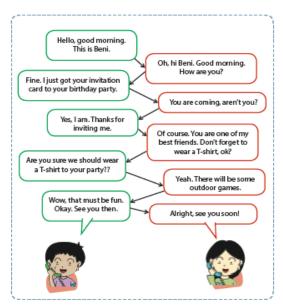
Raw data was collected from thirteen units of the student book from Bahasa Inggris "When English Rings Bell" for grade eight. The coding schemes based on the construct of dimensions of culture. In order to make the result of data analysis reliable, there are two coders including the researcher in analyzing the textbook. The researcher analyzed the book using the construct of cultural dimensions which were adapted from Moran's theory and added related theories from some experts. The conclusion was drawn based on the percentage and the description.

Here the following pictures as the example of analyzing the cultural dimension:

Picture 1. contains of product dimension of food which is shown by the picture of birthday cake and name shown by Lina, an Indonesian name. It also shows perspective dimension using the expressions that indicates etiquette and verbal behavior to express a birthday invitation "come to my birthday, please!" and express the birthday greeting "happy birthday Lina". The last, the picture which describes a girl and her birthday cake shows a birthday celebration that belongs to acts in practice dimension.

Picture 2. contains of product dimension of tool which is shown by the picture of two persons using phone, name shown by Beni, an Indonesian name, in the conversation ballots of the two persons. Good/thing shown by the mention of T-shirt in the conversation, and the picture of phone. Meanwhile, clothes/fashions shown by the picture of clothes on the two person. The dimension of practice of operation shown by the two person wearing clothes (a product of culture). The picture of two persons phoning each other belongs to act in practice dimension. It also shows perspective of dimension using expressions that indicates perceptions to express "don't forget to wear T-shirt", it shows the girl's idea and thought, attitude to express "thanks for inviting me" (thanking someone after getting invited to a party is an attitude), etiquette to express "hello, good morning", "thanks for inviting me", the first expression shows how to begin a converstaion on the phone, started by greeting, the later also shows the etiquette after getting something (invitation) from someone, it shows that human have respect for each other. Last, expressions of "hello good morning", "thanks for inviting me" aslo include in verbal behavior.

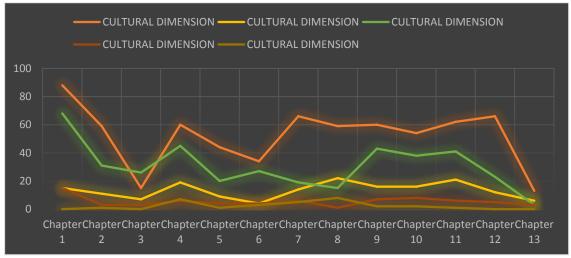




Picture 2.

From those two descriptions of cultural dimension in the textbook, it could be concluded that this book explored the cultural content quite well. Although not all cultural dimensions showed in one picture, text or dialog, the materials in this textbook contained the all dimensions such as product, perspectives, practices, communities, and persons both explicitly and implicitly.

Chart 1. Cultural Dimension Distribution



From the chart above, it showed that the dimension of product (50.30%) dominated the cultural content in this book, 680 items are found from total 1352 items. Then it followed by dimensions of perspectives (29.51%) which consisted of 399 items, dimension of practice (12.72%) which consisted of 172 items, dimensions of communities (5.25%) in 71 items and dimensions of persons (2.22%) in 30 items. From the chart we knew that the distribution of cultural dimensions are imbalance. We could not judge that this book was good or not by showing the imbalance factor because the materials were presented in the text book should followed the syllabi from the ministry of education and culture of Indonesia. Although the distribution of cultural dimension was imbalance, this book discussed 16 aspects in cultural dimensions as followed: artefacts such as name, food, document, language, money, tool, good/things, and hobby; places such as buildings, houses; institutions such as family, law, religion, education, occupation, media, and entertainment, art forms such as instrument, music, clothes, painting, movie, literature and architecture, operation such as describing how to use or make the product of culture; acts such as eating habit, behave, and celebration; scenario such as communicative practices; intellectual values such as; though, habits, perceptions, beliefs, traditional values, etiquette, attitudes, ethnics, and ideas; behaviors such as non-verbal behaviors patterns, verbal behaviors patterns, and reactions to particular situations; minor values such as traffic rules, and travel habits, major values such as history, geography; formal values such as legal system; specific social contexts such as national culture, and personal identity. It could be concluded that the cultural content was presented and explored well in this textbook. In addition, the perspectives dimension had the big portion (29.51%) since the curriculum in Indonesia have been developing the character building. In line with Mendez (2005) values in English textbook is important because it promotes attitudes of respect and tolerance. In this matter, this textbook gave the good experiences for the students to promote respect, tolerance, accepting the diversity and other characters through perspectives dimensions. Moreover, the cultural content in the textbook also gain the ability to behave in a culturally appropriate manner (Moran, 2001).

Not only improved the attitudes, the cultural content in this textbook also fostered reflection upon one's own culture since the materials explored more Indonesian cultures than the target culture. Exploring the source culture more than target culture in teaching English also decrease the students' competence to comprehend, adapt, and integrate into target culture. Through English textbook, the students should have the experiences about the target culture to enhance intercultural competence. Chao (2011) suggests that an equal distribution of source culture, target culture and international culture materials should be required in the content arrangement of ELT textbooks. This is to help students to deal with lots of cultural conflicts during the process of intercultural communication. Adding the supplementary materials related to target and international culture by the teacher during using this book in class is highly recommended to support the students in gaining intercultural competence.

Conclusions

The cultural aspects are needed to be included in English learning materials to support the students understanding when learning the target language. Without cultures, the students would get lost in acquiring the language they learn. This is because all cultural aspects could be put in the material being learned without leaving the essence of learning language itself. The textbook entitled Bahasa Inggris "When English Rings a Bell" for grade eights has already presented the cultural dimension and explore them in various aspects of culture well though it has less attention in exploring the target culture. Therefore, it is suggested for the Ministry of Education and Culture to encourage the publishing of textbooks representing balance the cultural including source culture

(Indonesian culture), target culture (native speakers countries) and international culture to support students' intercultural competence. It helps English teachers who have less experiences related to target and international culture to provide the cultural topics that it has not been presented comprehensively in the textbook. Through this study, the teacher or the users hopefully get more understanding about the application of cultural content in English textbook.

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